

**THE METACOLONIAL STATE: PAKISTAN, THE DEOBAND
'ULAMA AND THE BIOPOLITICS OF ISLAM**

by

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A dissertation submitted in partial fulfillment
of the requirements for the degree of
Doctor of Philosophy
(History)
in The University of Michigan
2010

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HAUNTOLOGY

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DEDICATION

Dedicated to my beautiful mother Yasmin Jan and the beloved memory of my father Brian Habib Ahmed Jan

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

There are many people to whom I owe my deepest gratitude for bringing me to this stage and for shaping the world of possibilities. One's access to a space of thought is possible only because of the examples and paths laid by the other. I must begin by thanking my dissertation committee: my co-chairs Juan Cole and Nicholas Dirks, for their intellectual leadership, scholarly example and incredible patience and faith. Nick's seminar on South Asia and his formative role in Culture/History/Power (CSST) program at the University of Michigan were vital in setting the critical and interdisciplinary tone of this project. Juan's masterful and prolific knowledge of West Asian histories, languages and cultures made him the perfect mentor. I deeply appreciate the intellectual freedom and encouragement they have consistently bestowed over the years. Alexander Knysh for his inspiring work on Ibn 'Arabi, and for facilitating several early opportunities for teaching my own courses in Islamic Studies. And of course my deepest thanks to Barbara Metcalf for unknowingly inspiring this project, for her crucial and sympathetic work on the Deoband 'Ulama and for her generous insights and critique. There were many other inspiring teachers and guides that shaped my trajectory while at the University of Michigan; Dr. Mustansir Mir for opening the doors to graduate school, for accepting me as his student to begin with, and for his critical support at the outset of a life-long graduate career. To visiting scholars Gyan Pandey and Partha Chatterjee for some of the best seminars I had at Michigan. To Fernando Coronil and Ann Stoler for the

Aftermath of Empire Seminars; Lee Schlesinger for being a genuine model of scholastic passion and inquiry and Jonathan Marwil for inspiring me, through his superb *Twentieth Century American Wars* course, to teach. I would like to thank the Department of History and its incredible staff for all the extended years of support, and to the History/Anthropology programme for providing a unique and incredible intellectual milieu. Without the critical financial support from the Social Science Research Council and the American Institute of Pakistan Studies, my two years of dissertation research would not have been possible. A special thanks also to David Gilmartin and Kathy Ewing.

The past three years at the University of Colorado have also been formative of this work. While I was running out of time at Michigan, CU and the Department of Geography provided me with the space to truly think. I am indebted to Denis McGilvary and Tim Oakes for bringing me here and for the crucial role in turning a two year fellowship into a tenure track job. While at CU, the mentoring and intellectual friendship of Tim Oakes, Elizabeth Dunn, Emily Yeh, and Joe Bryan were incredibly vital. Without their encouragement and faith in me I may not have made the challenging transition from history/anthropology to geography. Also in the closing years of this work I must thank Joel Wainwright not only for some wonderful conversations but also for proving that Heidegger can work in Geography.

I would be remiss if I did not mention the critical influence of my earliest teachers. At Rhodes College, my interest in philosophy and social theory was shaped by the intellectual generosity, kindness and superb mentorship of Larry Lacy. A profound thanks also to Susan Kus whose fantastic and inspiring anthropology classes, especially

Alternative Realities, were a decisive influence. And also at Rhodes Mark Muese and Tom McGowan for their intellectual encouragement, conversations and genuine commitments to fostering a questioning disposition. Without all these exemplars the thought of graduate school would never have seemed feasible.

During my wonderful years at Saint Patrick's High School in Karachi, Mrs. Henderson meant everything. Without her encouragement and her love of learning and literature, I would probably have been an engineer. She has been a force at St. Patrick's and I feel badly for the generations that will not know her. I would be remiss also if I did not mention my elementary school teachers. Jill Sheridan; I remember the day she placed a copy of Tolkien's "Lord of the Rings" in the tiny hands of curious 9 year old. The experience of reading that book changed everything. To Bob Veriakin for placing me in the *Boffin Group* and Mrs. Cooper for her love and care.

There are too many friends and family members who have been vital to me. At Ann Arbor, while serving time as a graduate student, key friendships developed which not only provided companionship but also a vital interdisciplinary intellectual environment. Tina Meltzer and Tom O'Donnell were my second home in the United States. Their love and friendship is irreplaceable. Other friends also became more like family: Sanjiv Gupta, Chandra Rahman, Joy Mazumdar, Nadeem Hussain, Rochelle Davis. Over the years Farina Mir and William Glover have been genuine friends and their support and encouragement remains indispensable. I must also thank Asad Ali and Naveeda Khan for including me in their AAA panels, sessions which were also important in shaping the direction of this work, in particular Naveeda's *Rethinking Pakistan* seminar at Johns Hopkins. Rob Rozenhall, eased my transition from Karachi to Lahore,

and allowed me to use his motorcycle. Other dear friends who like everyone else mentioned have been critical interlocutors as well as great comrades; Munis Faruqi, Tom Abowd, Vazira Zamindar, Asim Khan. A special thanks to Julietta Singh for her love and friendship at a critical moment.

In Karachi I developed unbreakable bonds of love and friendship with Abbas Ali, Sohail Ghazi, Noor Fakir Muhammad, Azhar Ali Patel. The sustained warmth and love of these individuals and their families has made returning to Pakistan both necessary and always vital. However to one friend in particular I owe everything, Nauman Naqvi. I do not know what I would have done without his love and presence in my life. He is a rare and incredible individual, and the inspiration behind this project. His traces are everywhere in these pages. Above all I thank him for introducing me to Heidegger and Foucault and for first making me aware of the distinction between a way of life and form-of-life.

None of this of course would have been possible without the support of my extended family in Karachi, London and the United States. To all my cousins, Khalas and Mamoos, for love affection and so many wonderful memories. Also my in-laws, Shahida and Dr. Iqbal Beg, and Maheen and Saira for all your wonderful kindness, love and support, but most importantly for being there for us and of course Aneela. But like Nauman among friends, there is always someone special within ones extended family; Mansoor Ahmed. The formative role he has played in my intellectual life is incalculable. I was always mesmerized by his speech, his eloquence and his magnificent example. If I return to Karachi it is always only to speak with him and to be in his presence.

My siblings Naveed, Aasma and Sumrah Jan. Their warmth, love and existence are incredible and they are a part of who I am. The nostalgia I have for our childhood and teen years together is often painful. I so regret the physical distance that now separates us, and I truly miss not being able to be constantly around my nieces and nephews.

And finally of course to my little angels, Amr and Mishaal, two of the most beautiful and wonderful people in my world. They are truly such incredibly good children, a parent could not possibly hope for more. Their love, patience and good humor during all of this is beyond gratitude. Thank you for putting up with my endless delays, promises, missed weekends. I hope only that one of you becomes the beneficiary of my library. And Aneela, for whom no words are sufficient. She has been an integral part of my life since High School. Without her I could not have come this far, and her love, our love, is above everything else. Her labors and sacrifices are greater than mine. To her I owe an endless gratitude. All the happiness and comfort in my adult life is only because of her.

And once again, to my mother and father. I could not imagine a world without their endless love, nurturing and critical support. My late father was an exemplar of honesty and integrity, and my biggest regret is that he could not be here. My mother Yasmin has inspired me, from the very beginning to think. My curiosity and wonder about the world was indelibly shaped by her example. Thank you with all the sincerity of my heart.¹

¹ Note: This acknowledgment was written in the few moments before the submission deadlines. They say no one ever reads a dissertation — I hope so. But I know I have left out the names of many people who I should not have, and have expressed things here in a hurried, clichéd fashion. But there is no real substitute for the word love. More than any of the paragraphs included in this work these should have received the most attention.

Preface

Life brought me so I came,
 Death takes me so I go.
I came not willfully,
 Nor willfully I go.
 – Sheikh Muhammad Ibrahim Zauq (1789-1854) – *Diwan-e-Zauq*

We remain of necessity strangers to ourselves, we do not understand ourselves, we must mistake ourselves, for us the maxim reads to all eternity: “each is furthest from himself” — with respect to ourselves we are not “knowers”...
 – Friedrich Nietzsche, *On the Genealogy of Morals*

We shall not cease from exploration
And the end of all our exploring
Will be to arrive where we started
And *know* the *place* for the first *time*.
 – T.S. Elliot (*emphasis mine*)

In the wake of 911 we have witnessed a veritable explosion of discourses on Islam, and certainly we are already familiar with that phrase ‘an incitement to discourse’; the interplay between pleasure and power, between resistance and subjectivity, in Foucault’s seminal account of sexuality in *The Will to Knowledge*. The “machinery of power” that was deployed against deviant sexualities “did not aim to suppress it, but rather to give it an analytical, visible, and permanent reality.”² If Foucault’s work was a concerted meditation on the modern deployments of criminality, madness and sexuality,

² Michel Foucault, *The History of Sexuality: An Introduction*, trans. Robert Hurley, vol. 1, History of Sexuality (New York: Vintage Books, Random House, 1990).

then surely the figure of the suicide terrorist — that exemplary juridical object of Western governmentality which folds all three Foucauldian elements (the mad, the criminal and the sexualized body/soul) into a single figure — has become even more relevant in the era of biopolitical *securitas*. It appears that today, Islam has become an especially “dense transfer point for relations of power”³ — the jihadist must have also have his “interior androgyny.” Implicitly this work asks about the stakes in these games of truth, in this *gigantomachia*, this battle of the giants, in the death embrace of ‘secularism’ and ‘religion’, in the dance between political Islam and the liberal West.

Heidegger’s life long concern with the question and the meaning of being—with the place of being and the situatedness of “man”—has been the singular impetus and inspiration behind this attempt to think the *place* of the political and the ethical in the now troubled constellations of modernity and “Islam.” Therefore following one of Heidegger’s most obdurate truisms regarding the primacy of ontology over epistemology, ‘the metacolonial’ in the title of this work, must properly be understood as an ontological⁴ rather than as a political or historical category. This neologism however is not an excuse to hide behind ‘theory/philosophy’ — as if thought and practice were ever distinct. The work aims therefore to be a material, embodied, history and politics of the ‘ulama practices as a form of power; a genealogy of the violences and the silences of Islam.

In the introduction to *Ontology: The Hermeneutics of Facticity*, Heidegger notes that his impetus for the *destrucktion* (de-construction, dismantling, or de-saturation) of

³ Ibid.

⁴ In this work as a whole however I do not develop the ontological resonances of this term. See Appendix A on critical ontology.

the tradition of metaphysics and everydayness, emerged out of the specific questions and crisis of the present in which he was thrown. Both World Wars had a profound effect on the nature, misdirection and ‘turn’ of his thinking. We are today in the grip of a series of crisis, which though stamped with the provenance of this particular moment, this particular place and time, unfold in the wake of prior events. Our present, our crisis, is not some apocalyptic culmination of a historical *telos* or spirit. But it is *our* time.

Hence the task of undertaking a Foucaultian inflected (but ultimately Heideggerian) deconstruction of political Islam — a genealogy as critical/historical ontology — originates from our contemporary situatedness. It arises from the crisis of a *situation* which claims one in such a way that one is solicited, called to respond. But a response is not a reaction. Rather it is a practice of thought, a form-of-life perhaps. This ‘thinking’ is not for its own sake, nor for a known *telos*, but one which may facilitate openings and possibilities for “thinking otherwise.” The problematization of political Islam undertaken here, points to this space or opening between fact and facticity; a space that is *questionability* itself, one that has disclosive possibilities in its destructuring movement.

A Pre-face for Hauntology

As such, this *pre*-face is the proper place to unveil or disclose something of an *ethos*, spirit, and *mood* of the work. The *a priori* dimensions of this project then, its *pre*-face, is marked by a series of hauntings. The specter that haunts this work, also inhabits our very life-world. In a departure from Marxism, this specter is not Communism, nor for that matter is it Capitalism or even Islamism; these are merely its avatars.

The secret name of this metacolonial reading, one that remains a secret despite its telling, is hauntology. Critical/historical ontology seeks to disclose the specter, to witness it, as prelude to an embrace, an annihilation (*fana*), or perhaps even an exorcism. But whereas critical ontology is a practice of disclosure, hauntology is its more affective underbelly, its unmasking, its *mood*; the dreaded anticipation of an appearance or apparition of being. The fear of a nearness to being. The specter is in this way also the monstrous, both in the sense of a showing, an omen, and the simultaneous failure of signification, the unspeakable – *it*, the *thing*! The monstrous is a warning, a reminder. It is an admonishment that is also a summons, and a premonition that is also a demonstration.⁵ This work then is a merely a hint, an inkling, an echo or *Anklang*⁶ of the play of the specter. Therefore in the unmasking we must ask after what remains un-asked, namely the remains of being⁷. And yet what is *unmasked* in the question of being/power, is *masking* itself.

A Pre-face for the Metacolonial

As a critical interrogation of political Islam and its present, the metacolonial cannot be divorced from its broader moorings within Heidegger's devastating critique of the metaphysics of presence. Furthermore, in what is perhaps the most philosophically significant chapter in *Homo Sacer*, Agamben pursues this critique through a rethinking of the relation between potentiality and actuality: "*Until a new and coherent ontology of*

⁵ All terms share the Latin root, the present active *moneō*, and the present infinitive *monēre*. My thanks to Joel Wainwright for this suggestive linkage between the daemon and demonstration.

⁶ In *Contributions* Heidegger uses the word *Anklang* for echo. It denotes the initial moment in which a sound arises but has not yet fully unfolded. It carries over the tension between silence and expectation, between withdrawal and intimation.

⁷ Santiago Zabala, *The Remains of Being: Hermeneutic Ontology after Metaphysics* (Columbia University Press, 2009).

potentiality [...] has replaced the ontology founded on the primacy of actuality and its relation to potentiality, a political theory freed from the aporias of sovereignty remains unthinkable.”⁸ Islam is today, by its own adherents most particularly, regarded as an essence, a way of life. Hence Islam, like biopolitics in Foucault, has an onto-theological structure. If as I am suggesting, Islam today is an avatar of *machination* or what Heidegger called *technē*, then we can no longer rely simply on representational and epistemological models to expose it. What is exposed however is not Islam as such, but *homo Islamicus* who now dwells in the *Islamapolis*. In the *Islamapolis*, Muslim experience in relation to the present is one which is increasingly understood in terms of identity, actuality and action.

The metacolonial is also, like biopolitics and genealogy, the Trojan horse that inaugurates the interrogation of the political, and by extension political Islam, as an ontological rather than a merely political or violent epistemological category⁹. In my view this *troubling* of political Islam, this disclosure of Islam itself as a “regime of truth,” is a critical prelude towards the possibility of rethinking Islam’s ethical potentialities.¹⁰ The metacolonial, unlike the postcolonial, does not operate within a conception of the West that privileges or essentializes the spatio-temporal moment of capitalism/colonialism as an originary and destructive force.¹¹ I am suggesting then that political Islam today, its gathering (*jama‘at*), responds not to the call of prayer (*adhan*),

⁸ Giorgio Agamben, *Homo Sacer: Sovereign Power and Bare Life*, trans. Daniel Heller-Roazen, Meridian (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 1998).

⁹ See Appendix A on critical ontology.

¹⁰ Lest anything written here be misconstrued, I do not believe that the farce of liberalism gives way to the promise of a liberal/progressive/traditionalist Islam; the two are caught up —as Benjamin’s *Angelus Novus* would protest — in the same catastrophe. It is then *with* the catastrophe, *with* the crisis of being, that the thoughts in this work turn.

¹¹ Rodolphe Gasché, *Europe, or the Infinite Task: A Study of a Philosophical Concept*, Meridian: Crossing Aesthetics (Stanford University Press, 2008).

but rather *Gestell*. This work seeks to illuminate the nature of this calling in the hopes of opening up a space for other voices, and, perhaps more importantly, other silences that we no longer have ears to hear.

In his preface to *Remnants of Auschwitz*, Agamben describes his commentary on the *place* of testimony as laying “signposts” which might allow “future cartographers of the new ethical territory to orient themselves.”¹² In this work I am attempting to think/write a deconstructive genealogy of political Islam. It is my hope that a historical and political cartography of the “worlding” of the ‘ulama, will open a potential pathway into this new ethical space.

¹² Giorgio Agamben, *Remnants of Auschwitz : The Witness and the Archive* (New York: Zone Books, 1999).

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LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS

ANP	Awami National Party
CMLA	Chief Martial Law Administrator
COP	Combined Opposition Parties
CSP	Civil Services of Pakistan
HM	Hizb-ul Mujahideen
HuM	Harkat-ul Mujahideen
IJI	Islami Jamhoori Ittehad
IPG	Independent Parliamentary Group
JeM	Jaish-e-Muhammad
JI	Jama'at-i Islami
JUI	Jam'iyat al-'Ulama-i Islam
JUP	Jam'iyat al-'Ulama-i Pakistan
JWP	Jamhoori Watan Party
LeT	Lashkar-i Taiba
ML	Muslim League
MNA	Member of National Assembly
MPA	Member of Provincial Assembly
MQM	Muhajir Qaumi Mahaz
MRD	Movement for the Restoration of Democracy
NA	National Assembly
NAP	National Awami Party
NDF	National Democratic Front
NDP	National Democratic Party
NPP	National Peoples Party
NWFP	North West Frontier Province
OPG	Official Parliamentary Group
PDM	Pakistan Democratic Movement
PAI	Pakistan Awami Ittehad
PML	Pakistan Muslim League
PNP	Pakistan National Party
PPI	Punjabi-Pakhtun Ittehad
PPP	Pakistan Peoples Party
QMA	Qaumi Mahaz-i-Azadi
SSP	Sipah-i Sahaba
TI	Tahrik-i Istiqlal
TNFJ	Tahrik-i Nifaz-i Fiqh-i Ja'faryia
TTP	Tahrik-i Taliban Pakistan
WAF	Women's Action Forum

GLOSSARY

adab – Belles letters, literature; culture and culturally prescribed forms of comportment.

adhan / *azan* – the Muslim call to prayer; from the root words ‘ear’ and ‘permit.’

Ahl-i Hadith – “The people of hadith.” A Sunni doctrinal orientation that emerged in late nineteenth-century colonial India. They denied the authority of all Sunni schools of law and insisted instead on the exclusive and unmediated authority of the Qur’an and hadith as the sources of all guidance. Effectively opposed *taqlid*.

Ahmadi – A doctrinal offshoot that emerged in late-nineteenth-century India and is defined most notably by the belief of its adherents (the Ahmadis) in the prophethood of the movement’s founder, Mirza Ghulam Ahmad (d. 1908).

amir – Leader of a group or community

Amir al-Momineen – Commander of the Faithfull.

anjuman – Association or organization.

Barelwi – The doctrinal orientation associated with Ahmad Rida Khan (d. 1921) of Bareilly, a small town in Uttar Pradesh in northern India. The Barelwis emphasize ritualized forms of devotion to the Prophet. Their ritual practices, which are often associated with Sufi shrines.

bid‘at – innovation or novelty in religious matters.

dar al-‘ulum – Institution of Islamic learning; see *madrasa*.

Dars-i Nizami – Classical madrasa syllabus introduced in India in the 17th century, and adapted with slight modification by the Deoband schools.

Deobandi – The doctrinal orientation associated with the *madrasa* of Deoband, in northern India; an adherent of this movement. The Deobandi movement, which emerged in late-nineteenth-century colonial India, lays stress on a renewed commitment to *hadith* and sacred law as the basis of a “reformed” and reinvigorated Islamic identity.

din – Faith; religion; way of life.

fatwa – A legal opinion issued by a jurisconsult (*mufti*).

fiqh – Islamic law and jurisprudence.

fitna – Disorder; chaos; the term is also used for the first civil wars in the history of Islam, which permanently divided the Muslim community into hostile factions and later into distinct sects.

fuqaha’ (*sing. faqih*) – Scholars of law (*fiqh*).

hadith – Traditions attributed to the Prophet Muhammad; regarded by Muslims as second to the Qur’an as a source of religious guidance and law.

Hanafi – A school of Sunni law named after Abu Hanifa (d. 767). Most Sunni Muslims in South Asia, including the Deobandis and the Barelwis, subscribe to this school of law.

Hanbali – A school of Sunni law named after Ahmad b. Hanbal (d. 855); an adherent of this school. Hanbalism is the dominant school of law in Saudi Arabia.

haram – Forbidden

hudud (*sing. hadd*) – Punishments expressly sanctioned in the Qur'an and the sunna, and (unlike many other punishments) not subject to being mitigated by the ruler or the aggrieved party.

huquq (*sing. haqq*) – Rights.

huquq Allah – The rights of God, regarded as non-negotiable.

hukm (*pl. ahkam*) – A legal ruling.

Hukumat – Government.

itiḥad – Systematic reflection on the foundational sources of the law to arrive at legal rulings on matters not already or explicitly determined by sacred law.

ikhtilaf – Disagreement among jurists.

‘ilm (*pl. ‘ulum*) – Knowledge; religious learning; science(s).

imam – Leader or head of the community; In Shi‘i Islam the *imams* are the descendants of ‘Ali who are regarded as infallible guides; the term is also used for the person leading the ritual prayers.

isnad – Chain of transmission that forms an essential part of any report relating the words or deeds of the Prophet Muhammad (*ḥadith*).

Ithna ‘ashari – (“Twelver”) Shi‘a – A sub-division of the Shi‘a, whose members regard twelve successive descendants of the Prophet Muhammad through his daughter Fatima and her husband, ‘Ali, to be their infallible religious guides (*imams*).

Ja‘fari – The school of law of the *Ithna ‘ashari* (“Twelver”) sect of the Shi‘a; named after the sixth Shi‘i imam, Ja‘far al-Sadiq (d. 765).

jahiliyya – “The age of ignorance”; refers to the era before the advent of Islam; also used in the twentieth century by certain Islamist thinkers to assert that their coreligionists were living in a new age of unbelief or apostasy.

jama‘at / jama‘a – Group; association; community.

jihad – “struggle”. Two types of jihad are usually distinguished; an ‘internal’ struggle to forge character, self-formation, etc., and an external armed struggle or war against unbelievers or oppressors. Jihad as war can be invoked in self-defense or in the defense of Islam.

khilafa – “Deputyship”; the caliphate.

Khilafat al-Rashida – “The rightly guided caliphate”; designates the four caliphs (Abu Bakr, ‘Umar b. al-Khattab, ‘Usman b. ‘Affan, and ‘Ali b. Abi Talib) who immediately succeeded Muhammad as the leaders of the Muslim community (632-61 C.E.). To the Sunnis, they are the most revered of all the Companions (*sahaba*) of Muhammad; the Shi‘a recognize only ‘Ali as a legitimate caliph and as their first imam.

kafir – One who disbelieves or denies the faith of Islam. See also *shirk*.

madhhab – School of law; in Urdu, sometimes used interchangeably with religion (*din*).

madrasa (pl. *madaris*) – Islamic/religious school, seminary or institution of higher Islamic learning.

Maliki – A school of Sunni law named after Malik b. Anas (d. 795).

masjid – Mosque. Place of worship.

maqtab – usually a small school attached to a mosque for elementary Islamic learning

mawlawi / mawlana – Also spelt maulana. A term used to designate a religious scholar; see *‘ulama*.

millat / milla – A community defined by ties of faith (see *ummah*).

mufti – A jurisconsult; one who issues legal opinions (*fatwas*)

mujahidin – Those waging *jihad*.

mujtahid – A practitioner of *ijtihad*.

muqallid – A practitioner of *taqlid*.

mullah – A religious scholar or master; see *maulana*, *‘ulama*.

pak – pure. As in *Pakistan*, the pure state, the nation of the pure

pir – A Sufi master. Also often rulers or leaders in rural communities

qawm – Nation as defined by ties of ethnicity, shared territory, and language.

qadi – Muslim judge who rules according to the shari‘a

qanun – Law as enunciated by the ruler, as distinguished from the discourses of the Muslim jurists (*fiqh*).

sahaba – The Companions of the Prophet Muhammad. For the Sunnis, they are not only the source of all information about the teachings of Muhammad but also the paragons of religious authority that is second only to the Prophet. The Shi‘a recognize only some of the Companions as righteous.

Shafi‘i – A school of Sunni law, named after Muhammad b. Idris al-Shafi‘i (d. 820); an adherent of that school.

shari‘a – The totality of Islamic legal and ethical norms; the sacred law of Islam.

shaykh / shaikh – (pl. *mashayakh*) A religious scholar; a Sufi master. Also spelt.

shirk – The greatest sin in Islam; associating another being, entity or person with God

Shi‘a (sing. Shi‘i) – Community of Muslims who, unlike the Sunnis, believe that after the death of the Prophet infallible religious guidance must continue in the person of the *imams*, who are divinely designated to lead the community in religious and political matters. There are several subdivisions within the Shi‘a, of which the historically most important are the *Ithna ‘ashariyya* and the *Isma‘iliyya*.

Sufi – Muslim mystic. Sufi practice is also referred to as *tasawwuf*.

sunna – The normative example of the Prophet, usually expressed in the form of reports relating his teachings and conduct (*hadith*).

Sunnis – Those professing adherence to the *sunna* of the Prophet and to the agreed upon norms and practices of the universal Muslim community. The Sunnis constitute the overwhelming majority of the Muslim people worldwide.

tabligh – The preaching of Islam.

Tabligh-i Jama‘at – A proselytizing movement that emerged in early-twentieth century India and now has operations worldwide. Those associated with the Tabligh-i Jama‘at often belong to or have some affinity with the Deobandi orientation.

taqlid – “Investing with authority”; following the legal rulings of earlier scholars, or of the school of law to which one professes adherence.

taqwa – piety; fear of God.

‘ulama (sing. *‘alim*) – Men of learning, those who possess knowledge (*‘ilm*). Usually applied to a class or group of religious scholars who have formal training in the Islamic religious sciences, especially but not exclusively in Islamic law and hadith.

ummah – The global, pan-Islamic community of Muslims.

usul al-fiqh – The sources of the law; the principles of the science of jurisprudence and the methodology of legal reasoning.

Wahhabi – An adherent of the puritanical teachings of Muhammad ibn ‘Abd al-Wahhab (d. 1791); Wahhabism is the official ideology of the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia.

waqf – (pl. *awqaf*) – Pious endowments

wali – “Friend [of God]”; saint

zakat – Islamic alms-tax paid annually on one’s accumulated wealth; one of the five “pillars” of the faith.

(Glossary partly adapted from Qasim Zaman, *The ‘Ulama in Contemporary Islam: Custodians of Change*, Princeton Studies in Muslim Politics. Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2002).

ABSTRACT

The Metacolonial State is a genealogical project that is concerned with understanding the nature of political space in contemporary Pakistan. My contention is that political Islam, and specifically the Deoband and Taliban ‘ulama, have taken on an increasingly biopolitical character. As “a history of the present” I show how the crisis in Pakistan today is itself a manifestation of the biopoliticization of Islam. While the Deoband ‘ulama remain the primary thematic subject and focus of the work, they are largely signposts towards a broader attempt to disclose a cartography of power. Within the multiplicity of Islamist practices in Pakistan, the Deoband movement has emerged as one of the most highly organized and yet remarkably polycentric institutions that claim orthodox religious authority. Until September 11 2001, scholarship on political Islam in Pakistan had been focused on ‘modernist’ and ‘fundamentalist’ movements; traditional ‘ulama were considered to be politically and culturally insignificant. The dramatic rise of the Taliban and its fateful alliance with Al-Qaeda have however resulted in a proliferation of new discourses about the ‘ulama, their traditions and educational institutions. Precisely because of the imperial gaze directed towards the control, reform and regulation of Islam, this study places our understanding of Islamist politics within a broader, complex, and overlapping set of governmentalities and competing sovereign powers. The work aims to be a material, embodied history and politics of the ‘ulama as a

form of power. I argue that while ‘ulama practices have undergone a series of dramatic transformations since 1947, these cannot be understood in isolation from the broader militarization of political space; hence the need for opening this investigation with an analysis of the mullah-military complex that emerged in the 1980’s. The ‘metacolonial’ is itself a neologism that articulates two influential critical paradigms: Foucault’s concern with biopolitics and governmentality and Agamben’s illuminating thesis on sovereign power, bare life and the state of exception. Pakistan is shown to be an exemplary space of biopolitical sovereignty where the state of exception takes on a near permanent localization and where distinctions between dictatorship and democracy, between ‘secular’ and ‘religious’ forces becomes indistinct.

Chapter I

Introduction

If politics today seems to be going through a protracted eclipse and appears in a subaltern position with respect to religion, economics, and even the law, that is so because, to the extent to which *it has been losing sight of its own ontological status*, it has failed to confront the transformations that gradually have emptied out its categories and concepts.

— Agamben¹³

[If] Islam dominated the world, terrorism would rise against Islam, for it is the very world, the globe itself, which resists globalization.

— Baudrillard¹⁴

Cartographies of the Political: Toward the Metacolonial State/Space

On October 21st 2009, at around 3:00 PM, the usually calm and contemplative atmosphere of Islamabad's International Islamic University (IIUI), was shattered by a double suicide bombing that killed six people, including three young *hijab* clad girls. Dozens of other victims were severely injured in the blasts, one of which was detonated at the women's cafeteria and the other outside the office of the chairman of the department of Islamic Law (shari'a). Baudrillard's words, which I cite as an epigram to this chapter, echo resoundingly in these bombings, an event which is indeed paradigmatic

¹³ ———, *Means without End: Notes on Politics*, trans. Vincenzo Binetti and Cesare Casarino, vol. 20, *Theory out of Bounds* (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 2000), p. ix.

¹⁴ Jean Baudrillard, *The Spirit of Terrorism*, trans. Chris Turner, New Revised ed. (Verso, 2003), p. 12.

of the war between Islamist forces and an Islamic state. Government agencies were quick to blame the *Tahrik-i Taliban* Pakistan (TTP) for the attack with Interior Minister Rehman Malik stating yet again that “all roads lead to South Waziristan.”¹⁵ According to figures released by the Pakistan ministry of interior, 2009 has been one of the bloodiest years since the beginning of what can only be described as the opening of yet another deadly front in the series of ongoing civil-wars of Pakistan. Over 80 bombing incidents in 2009 alone have claimed over 1200 lives. Since 2006 various sources place the death toll at over 8000¹⁶.

In a series of recent research trips to Pakistan what I found to be most disquieting with regard to the ongoing crisis was a pervasive *mood* of radical uncertainty and doubt, often expressed by the inability of even informed local actors and analysts to make sense of the crisis. In the space of this uncertainty, a space marked continuously by the threat of violence and death, conspiracy theories are of course rampant. What each of these theories, both sane and insane have to offer, is the idea that structures of invisibility govern the visible. Ask anyone on the streets and you will find any number of variations of the hidden hand thesis; ‘the Taliban is not ‘really’ the Taliban’, ‘Muslims cannot be doing this to other Muslims’, ‘the CIA, Mossad, RAW wish to destabilize Pakistan’, ‘secret elements within the shadowy ISI are seeking to subvert democracy’, ‘President Zardari is merely a tool for US policies’, and so on ad infinitum. That is to say the entire framework of political space is haunted by a cocktail of spooks and sovereign political wills. Nobody it seems abides¹⁷ by Pakistan. Even the protest by IIUI¹⁸ students that

¹⁵ *Dawn*, Oct 21, 2009.

¹⁶ These figures do not including body counts of the military or “insurgents.”

¹⁷ I borrow the import of this term from Qadri Ismail, *Abiding by Sri Lanka: On Peace, Place, and Postcoloniality*, Public Worlds (University of Minnesota Press, 2005).

followed in the wake of the University attacks simply invoked the generic “just say no to terrorism” while simultaneously holding the state accountable for its failure to protect its citizens. Everybody is suspicious of everybody, nothing seems real or genuine. It is as if the entire country is now held together by the thread of nihilism itself. Pakistan is clearly facing an existential crisis of epic proportions, one that perhaps far surpasses the crisis of the separation of “East Pakistan” in 1972.

This “homeland” for the Muslims of British India, is increasingly producing both real and imagined states of homelessness for its beleaguered citizens¹⁹. While there is no doubt a direct link between the commencement of Army operations in the FATA region and the dramatic escalation of violence in Pakistan since 2006, this work will argue that a more rigorous conceptual and historical understanding of the structure of violence is needed if we are to begin to make sense of what has confounded local analysts and the public alike. The aim of this dissertation, in its most prosaic terms, is in part to provide visibility to the space of the political where the violent contests between local, national, international and trans-national sovereign forces are playing themselves out. It is in many ways a preliminary history, or *gene*-alogy of specters that haunt this now almost permanent ‘space of exception’. Even as I write, this space of exception threatens to take on a permanent localization in Pakistan, in a way that has already consumed Afghanistan.

¹⁸ With financial assistance from Saudi Arabia and Egypt, the Islamic University was founded on November 11, 1980. The university’s website declares its mission: “The desire to produce scholars and practitioners, imbued with Islamic learning, character and personality, and capable to meet the economic, social, political and intellectual needs of modern times.” Located on the outer edges of Islamabad in Sector H-10, the University is a prominent icon of Islamabad’s architectural landscape, and currently enrolls 17,000 students, including 6,000 women and 2,000 foreign students. The university also has a history of links with jihadist organizations during the 1980’s and 1990’s. The infamous Muslim scholar Abdullah A’zam, Al-Qaeda leader and Osama Bin Laden’s mentor, was once a lecturer at the university before the mujahideen took up their CIA/ISI backed armed struggle against the Soviet invasion of Afghanistan in 1979. As one student recalls, “university’s students, back in those days, openly backed the cause of *jihadis* and some of them would hang portraits of Osama bin Laden and his other comrades in their hostel rooms” (*Newsline*, Oct 2009).

¹⁹ Already Pakistan has some of the highest figures for IDSP’s.

In Pakistan today security and terrorism have become a single deadly system in which they legitimate and justify each other's mode of being. In the desperate cycle of state terror and insurrectionary terrorism that has gripped Pakistan, and indeed the world, we need more than ever to understand the complexities of “power” and “violence”,²⁰ in both their repressive, revolutionary, resistant and fetishistic forms. This self-consciously interdisciplinary project — part history, ethnography, geography, philosophy, always critical — is both solicited by and responds to this crisis. (political violence is of course not new to Pakistan, the decade of the 1990's was also marred by forms of ethnic and state violence.

Globalization is perhaps the ineluctable and simultaneously enigmatic condition of our time. It goes without saying then that the political space under examination here is immediately global, and its contours cannot simply be folded into the borders of something called “Pakistani” history. Globalization is not merely about the reconfiguration of national powers — the circulation of goods, commodities, images and capital across territorial boundaries — but also about flows and configurations of power which produce new bodies, affects, desires, associations and understandings; in short

²⁰ This work is thus also simultaneously a meditation on power, violence and the body. I draw almost exclusively for my understanding of power on Foucault and Agamben. Violence has also become a thematic of intense recent scholarly attention. I draw also on Žižek's distinction between the “fascinating lure of ... directly visible ‘subjective’ violence” and the more invisible forms of a systemic and symbolic “objective” violence; a violence that lurks like “dark matter” in the social “background”; Slavoj Žižek, *Violence: Big Ideas/Small Books* (Picador, 2008). On violence see also the essays collected in Aisha Karim Bruce Lawrence, *On Violence: A Reader* (Duke University Press, 2007). See also Hannah Arendt, *On Violence*, Harvest Book (Harvest Books, 1970), Jennifer L. Culbert Austin Sarat, *States of Violence: War, Capital Punishment, and Letting Die* (Cambridge University Press, 2009), Marco Abel, *Violent Affect: Literature, Cinema, and Critique after Representation* (University of Nebraska Press, 2008). Also influential for this study are Allen Feldman, *Formations of Violence: The Nature of the Body and Political Terror in Northern Ireland* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1991), and Gyanendra Pandey, *Routine Violence: Nations, Fragments, Histories*, Cultural Memory in the Present (Stanford University Press, 2005). For a specifically Foucaultian critique see Beatrice Hanssen, *Critique of Violence: Between Poststructuralism and Critical Theory*, Warwick Studies in European Philosophy (Routledge, 2000).

globalization produces a new “sense of the world”.²¹ The crisis in Pakistan is understood immediately as both a local and trans-local phenomenon, where political space is both material and affective; it touches on the structure of feelings of everyday life.²² Especially in the wake of 9/11, within the broader global circulation of affect, Islam, with all of its multiple registers, is consumed at a more acute affective and bodily level. Juan Cole’s recent book *Engaging the Muslim World*,²³ recognizes ‘anxiety’ as a central motif that defines the biopolitical interplay between America and the Muslim World. While Cole’s book seeks to deconstruct the singular affective registers of each term, it would be fair to say the problems of violence and war that confront us in the age of terror, must be situated on a level which exceeds politics and history. The term for this excess, which I will elaborate on shortly, is biopolitical sovereignty. Not only then as Cole argues do we have to confront generalized anxieties mutually reflected in the Islam-West relationship, we must also take into consideration more immanent planes of affect that pervade the landscape of and between Muslim communities and states (Iranian anxieties about Arabs etc, Jewish anxieties about the Arab, Indian anxieties about Pakistan, vice versa and so on). My concern here is thus with a series of overlapping and immanent biopolitical and

²¹ Globalization is what Jean-Luc Nancy describes as an “enclosure in the undifferentiated sphere of a unitotality” (p. 28) a process that leads to an uninhabitable un-world or state of injustice, “an unprecedented geopolitical, economic, and ecological catastrophe” (p. 50), in contrast to the creative potential of *mondialization* (world-forming). See Jean-Luc Nancy, *The Creation of the World or Globalization* (New York: State University of New York Press, 2007), ———, *The Sense of the World* (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 1998), and Michael Hardt and Antonio Negri, *Empire* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 2000).

²² Ann Laura Stoler, “Affective States,” in *A Companion to the Anthropology of Politics*, ed. Joan Vincent David Nugent (Malden: Blackwell, 2004). Scholars of the political are now increasingly paying attention to the role of affect and passion in political life. Patricia Ticineto Clough, ed., *The Affective Turn: Theorizing the Social* (Duke University Press, 2007), Jonathan Flatley, *Affective Mapping: Melancholia and the Politics of Modernism* (Harvard University Press, 2008), John Protevi, *Political Affect: Connecting the Social and the Somatic*, Posthumanities (Univ Of Minnesota Press, 2009), and also Cheryl Hall, *The Trouble with Passion: Political Theory Beyond the Reign of Reason* (Routledge, 2005), all represent a significant advance in theorizing political affect.

²³ Juan Cole, *Engaging the Muslim World* (Palgrave Macmillan, 2009).

sovereign anxieties. The intensification and multiplication of this series of overlapping anxieties — especially in regions which are more concretely impacted by the decision of imperial policies and the destructive regimes of neoliberal globalization — tend to aggravate and intensify the “state of exception”²⁴ and the attendant production of what Italian social and political ‘theorist’ Giorgio Agamben calls ‘bare life.’ Bare life is naked life, a life (*zoē*) without value, at once included and excluded from the law. The neologism ‘*metacolonial*’ that I deploy in this work, is not meant to displace the postcolonial, but instead seeks to capture a sense of the nihilistic condition which pervades our time.²⁵

The metacolonial then, articulates two fundamental theoretico-political trajectories from the work Michel Foucault (1926 –1984), and Giorgio Agamben (1942) into a single conceptual space: Foucault’s concern with biopolitics and governmentality and Agamben’s illuminating thesis on sovereign power, bare life and the state of exception. These two critical vectors are then gathered under the sign of the *metacolonial*, a term which is at the heart of the thesis. The metacolonial is thus a single term meant to capture the critical thrust of these paradigms which are now already widely deployed in the social and human sciences.²⁶ The metacolonial is thus a sovereign biopolitical space where the state of exception takes on a near permanent localization.

²⁴ The term is Agamben’s. I elaborate on the significance of this term for my project in this and subsequent chapters. See Giorgio Agamben, *State of Exception*, trans. Kevin Attell (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2005).

²⁵ Agamben, *Homo Sacer: Sovereign Power and Bare Life*. The concept of bare life signifies a “new academic interest in nonrepresentational approaches to the question of being which conceive of time-space as having no determined actuality.” Quoted in Helen Thomas and Jamilah Ahmed, eds., *Cultural Bodies: Ethnography and Theory* (Malden, MA: Blackwell Publishers, 2004). The metacolonial is thus also an attempt to think in nonrepresentational terms. See also Nigel Thrift, *Non-Representational Theory: Space, Politics, Affect* (London: Routledge, 2008).

²⁶ See Chapter 2. We might also begin to think about the metacolonial as a kind of ontological imperialism; a form of power that is thus both after, above (*meta-ta-physica*) and before formal colonialism

Part of the innovation of this project, its conceit, is to bring these powerful disclosive paradigms to bear on an understanding of political Islam in Pakistan. Political Islam is not by any means monolithic even in Pakistan, let alone globally, and in this study I have chosen to concentrate on the Pakistani vectors of the Deoband school in large part because of their intimate, though contested link with the Taliban phenomenon. My primary task then will be to show that the political space of Pakistan, and by extension the political practices of the Deoband ‘ulama have taken on an increasingly biopolitical character. At its broadest then this work is conceived as a genealogical history — “a history of the present” — of the crisis of Pakistan. My primary thesis and task will be to show how this history is itself a manifestation of the *biopoliticization of Islam*. From within this biopoliticization of Islam we can talk about and make sense of ‘ulama governmentality and the state of violence.

Stated differently, this work is animated principally by a concern to understand the forms of violence that have gathered around the horizons of political Islam. While the Deoband ‘ulama of Pakistan remain the primary thematic subject and focus of the work, they are largely signposts towards a broader attempt to disclose a cartography of the political. That is to say I am not principally concerned with a specific narrative history of political Islam in Pakistan, but rather am attempting to think this phenomenon in relation to what Foucault’s called the historico-political *a priori*.²⁷ One of the more rudimentary contentions that I will make is that the phenomenon of ‘Islamic/Islamist’ violence and terrorism, is not a problem of politics or religion as such, but rather a problem of *the*

²⁷ See Beatrice Han, *Foucault's Critical Project: Between the Transcendental and the Historical*, trans. Edward Pile, Atopia (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 2002). I will expand on the significance of Foucault’s historical *a priori* in Chapter 2.

political.²⁸ The aim here is to *problematize* political Islam, to show it up as an apparatus (what Foucault called a *dispositif*).²⁹ These problematizations do not constitute a new post-genealogical methodology or analytic, but instead are designed to induce a critical spirit that can at least witness, if not perhaps respond, to the state of exception in which we live. This study therefore revolves around one essential question; how to think the problematic of political Islam (and specifically the Deoband) genealogically and biopolitically. Through this term — the “metacolonial” — Islamic modernities³⁰ are brought face to face with the ghosts of metaphysics haunting our global, technological, biopolitical present. To disclose political Islam as a metacolonial phenomenon is therefore the specific task of this work. It must also be stated upfront that I arrived at the question of ‘ulama biopolitics only after observing, documenting and thinking about Deoband political somatics — its body politics. The Deoband commitment to the *enforcement* of shari‘a, the deployment of blasphemy as a technology of sovereign power, the production of the Ahmadi as heretic and ‘bare life’, and its valorization of violent *jihad*, are some of the examples that I use in this dissertation to open up a space for a new problematization of political Islam and ‘ulama praxis.

The provisional aim of this metacolonial analysis of political Islam will be to show how the space of the political — which unfolds today as a pure topology of

²⁸ Given the postfoundational distinction between politics and the political that I draw on, we can say therefore that the crisis is simultaneously an *onto-political* crisis. For an excellent account of Left-Heideggerian appropriations of political ontology see Oliver Marchart, *Post-Foundational Political Thought: Political Difference in Nancy, Lefort, Badiou and Laclau*, Taking on the Political (Edinburgh University Press, 2007). On another register this dissertation can be seen as an exploration the problematic of political Islam in terms of an historical and political ontology. In a work concluded in parallel to the dissertation I have begun to formulate the outlines of a critical ontology which further illuminate the meaning of the metacolonial: as a colonization or enframing of the life-world by metaphysics (*technē*).

²⁹ This is perhaps what Foucault had in mind with the terms *problematization* and *eventalization*, which were meant to designate a way of thinking beyond genealogy. See Rudi Visker, *Michel Foucault: Genealogy as Critique*, trans. Chris Turner (London & New York: Verso, 1995).

³⁰ See Aziz al-Azmeh, *Islams and Modernities*, 2nd ed., Phronesis (London & New York: Verso, 1996). The metacolonial is thus linked to “ghost-modernity”, rather than postmodernity.

exception — proliferates and intensifies through the alignment (and disaggregation) of sovereign orbits and imperial spaces. This political space, or field of power, can be characterized as a series of nested and overlapping sovereignties within a wider biopolitical matrix. This space can be understood as a grid of intelligibility that provides the conditions of possibility of political practice. Since the metacolonial is characterized above all as a state/space of exception,³¹ it will be necessary to highlight the political and *topological* structure of the exception and enunciate its relationship to Foucault's genealogy of power and the subject.³² The metacolonial state, is therefore a state of biopolitical exception, a state in which the capture of life finds a more or less permanent and stable spatial arrangement.

It should be noted upfront that my attempt here is not to outline a new paradigm for critical thought, but rather to attempt to think the problem of political Islam genealogically and, by extension biopolitically.³³ The metacolonial is a specific cartographic exercise whose topology relies extensively on Agamben's innovative account of the structure of the sovereign ban. To put it differently, the metacolonial is both an affect and a zone — a state/space — marked by the intensification of sovereign and biopolitical forms of power. The metacolonial designates this colonization of life by the will to power.³⁴ It is within this complex mapping of power that the practices and possibilities of the both the 'ulama and the army (the mullah-military complex) are to be

³¹ Agamben, *State of Exception*.

³² It would be possible to state in a nutshell that what I find limiting in most of the studies of Muslims and political Islam in Pakistan, is a series of 'untheorized' and largely liberal models of power and the subject. In contrast Foucault's rethinking of power and the subject, and post-structuralism more broadly, proceeds on the basis of a problematization of these two key elements. In large measure the conceptual work of chapter 1 responds to the rather impoverished uptake of a vast range of useful ways to think about time, space and the political. Agamben is exemplary in this regard.

³³ While biopolitics has become an important paradigm, like governmentality, in the social and human sciences, it has not yet been applied to the study of political Islam.

³⁴ Or metaphysics as *technē*.

situated. The metacolonial thesis offered here then, suggests that it is the modernist transformation and politicization of the *ummah* into a quasi-nationalist structure, that has enabled the ‘ulama to harness the destructive logic of sovereign power. This is the simplest dimension of what I mean by the phrase the *biopoliticization of the Islamic life-world*.

In the dominant forms of the Western and Islamist imaginary, some singular and unique theology, a civilizational ethos even, is supposed to ground the incommensurable difference between contemporary Islamic formations and the West. Neocons, Orientalists and Islamists alike assume that the “traditional”³⁵ textual sources of the Muslim life world, the Qur’an and Hadith, form the deep antechamber for both militant and democratic Islamist politics. Variations of this proposition which pervade as virtual truisms in public discourses on political Islam, need to be rethought significantly.³⁶ But *even though Islamic political language trades in the discursive coinage of tradition, the market in which these terms have purchase is today an altogether transformed space*. That is to say the Muslim world, its “traditional” market, has undergone a series of architectonic shifts, a disruption and transformation of its classical *episteme* to a modern one.³⁷ The terms ‘biopolitical’ and the ‘exception’ signal this transformation of Islamic space. Another key element of this thesis then will be an attempt to interrogate the

³⁵ My use of the term of course unfolds in the wake of the significant rethinking of this category along with its usual binary opposite modern. For the classic account see Eric J. Hobsbawm and Terence Ranger, eds., *The Invention of Tradition*, Canto (Cambridge & New York: Cambridge University Press, 1983), and Benedict Anderson, *Imagined Communities: Reflections on the Origins and Spread of Nationalism* (London & New York: Verso, 1991).

³⁶ See Haj’s excellent new study which significantly problematizes the very applicability of categories like ‘modern’, ‘secular’ and ‘tradition’ Samira Haj, *Reconfiguring Islamic Tradition: Reform, Rationality, and Modernity*, Cultural Memory in the Present (Stanford University Press, 2008). Haj’s work reflects the influence of Talal Asad’s anthropology of the secular. My aim here is to complete Asad’s project on a more radical footing.

³⁷ Talal Asad’s term “discursive tradition” draws only partially from the genealogical resonances of the Foucauldian term “discursive regime.” Talal Asad, *Genealogies of Religion: Discipline and Reasons of Power in Christianity and Islam* (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 1993).

consequences of this epistemic shift, and I have used the term metacolonial to signal this concern with political Islam *at the level of what Foucault called the épistème*.³⁸ Unlike the shifts from the classical to the renaissance to the modern *épistème* that Foucault has so admirably elaborated with respect to the West, the modernist shift in large parts of the Muslim world, and certainly South Asia, were accompanied by the colonial violence of a “distant sovereign”.³⁹ It is this colonial difference then that can account, in part, for the troubling experience of modernity in large parts of the Muslim world;⁴⁰ that is to say, on pain of a considerable generalization, that there is no clash between something called modernity and the west on the one hand and something called Islam on the other. Rather the violences and incoherence of political praxis in large parts of the Islamic world result from a disavowal, or misrecognition of its already modernist, biopolitical ground. As Agamben suggests, the “enigmas” of modern violence, can only be solved, “on the terrain – biopolitics – on which they were formed.”⁴¹ On Agamben’s diagnosis, the inevitable

³⁸ Given the significance of this move for the overall intelligibility of the thesis I have devoted chapter 2 to a clarification of Foucault’s anti-humanist genealogy.

³⁹ I borrow this term from Sudipta Sen, *Distant Sovereignty: National Imperialism and the Origins of British India* (New York: Routledge, 2002).

⁴⁰ Of course a similar disenchantment also pervades ‘the west’.

⁴¹ Agamben, *Homo Sacer: Sovereign Power and Bare Life*. Obviously modern violence (Islamic exceptionalism) is not an exclusive feature of political Islam. On the contrary liberal polities have a much longer and violent record of political praxis. See for instance Michael Dillon, *The Liberal Way of War: The Martial Face of Global Biopolitics*, Global Horizons (Routledge, 2009), Julian Reid, *The Biopolitics of the War on Terror: Life Struggles, Liberal Modernity and the Defence of Logistical Societies*, Reappraising the Political (Manchester University Press, 2007), Uday Singh Mehta, *Liberalism and Empire: A Study in Nineteenth-Century British Liberal Thought* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1999), Fred Anderson and Andrew Cayton, *The Dominion of War: Empire and Liberty in North America, 1500-2000* (Viking Adult, 2004). There is also an already vast literature on violences of ‘freedom’ and American exceptionalism (Anders Stephanson, *Manifest Destiny: American Expansionism and the Empire of Right*, 1st ed., Critical Issue Book (New York: Hill & Wang, 1995), Deborah L. Madsen, *American Exceptionalism* (University Press of Mississippi, 1998), Ashley Dawson and Malini Johar Schueller, eds., *Exceptional State: Contemporary U.S. Culture and the New Imperialism*, New Americanists (Duke University Press, 2007), Thomas R. Hietala, *Manifest Design: American Exceptionalism and Empire*, Cornell Paperbacks (Cornell University Press, 2003), Andrew Neal, *Exceptionalism and the War on Terror: The Politics of Liberty and Security after 9/11*, Routledge Critical Security Studies (Routledge, 2008), William V. Spanos, *American Exceptionalism in the Age of Globalization: The Spector of Vietnam* (State University of New York Press, 2008), Reginald Horsman, *Race and Manifest Destiny: Origins of*

failure of biopolitics, leads to the proliferation of an increasingly sovereign mentality. The impossible task then is to give an account of the *ruin* of the modernist Muslim subject — *homo Islamicus* — and by extension the ruination of Islam.

As is already evident then a plethora of terms — genealogy, governmentality, biopolitics, sovereignty, exception, episteme — are critical to this thesis. Given that these concepts are often deployed and articulated with a wide degree of differing latitude and even at times at cross purposes, a somewhat lengthy clarification of the way I understand and use these terms is essential for the intelligibility of the project as a whole. To be sure this is a history as genealogy, and it will be important to begin by clarifying the stakes of this articulation. Chapter 2 is therefore devoted to a clarification of these terms and highlights the conceptual and political work of disclosure they will perform in this thesis. The primary labor of this dissertation has been to forge a new *reading* of the crisis, rather than simply chronicle its historical unfolding. I will reserve a series of brief introductions to political Islam and Deoband ‘ulama in subsequent chapters, drawing out the ways in which my work is both situated within and departs from the extant literature.

The Deoband ‘Ulama

My concern in this dissertation is principally with understanding the religio-political⁴² nature of the Pakistani Deoband movement. This movement traces its formal historical origins to the Deoband *madrassa* (seminary), founded by Maulana Muhammad

American Racial Anglo-Saxonism (Harvard University Press, 1986), David E. Stannard, *American Holocaust: The Conquest of the New World* (Oxford University Press, 1993).

⁴² The term religio-political is used to suggest that religion like politics, is always saturated by relationships and effects of power. See Jon Simons, *Foucault and the Political*, Thinking the Political (London & New York: Routledge, 1995), and Chantal Mouffe, *On the Political*, Thinking in Action (Routledge, 2005).

Qasim Nanotawi (1832 – 80) and Maulana Rashid Ahmed Gangohi (1828 –1905), in British India’s United Provinces (UP now Uttar Pradesh)⁴³. A leading theological academy of modern India,⁴⁴ the Dar al-‘Ulum of Deoband has since its inception in 1866, spawned one of the most influential global “traditionalist”⁴⁵ (orthodox) institutions within the wider Muslim world. According to Barbara Metcalf, one of the western worlds foremost scholars of the Indian Deoband, the Deobandis were one of the several groups which sought to “reproduce Islamic culture in a colonial period characterized by considerable challenges to the preservation of traditional learning. ... they became known not only as a school but as a school of thought.”⁴⁶ This school of thought and movement was soon to take on “sectarian”⁴⁷ dimension, as it transformed from a *maslak*, a style of

⁴³ For the only serious full length historical account of the early Deoband see Barbara D. Metcalf, *Islamic Revival in British India: Deoband, 1860-1900* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1982). Zia-ul-Hasan Faruqi, *The Deoband School and the Demand for Pakistan* (New York: Asia Publishing House, 1963), is also useful. A valuable primary source is the two volume history by the Indian Deoband scholar Sayyid Mahboob Rizvi, *History of the Dar Al-‘Ulum Deoband*, trans. Murtaz Husain F. Quraishi (Deoband, UP, India: Idara-e Ihtemam, Dar al-‘Ulum, 1980). However by far the best and most comprehensive book-length treatment of the contemporary Deoband ‘ulama is Muhammad Qasim Zaman, *The ‘Ulama in Contemporary Islam: Custodians of Change*, Princeton Studies in Muslim Politics (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2002). Metcalf’s first book *Islamic Revival*, while seminal in many respects nonetheless ends her narrative at the precise moment of the rapid politicization of the ‘ulama; namely the 1918 Khilafat movement. In her valuable attempts to play down a series of Orientalist essentialism that link Islam with fanaticism she underplays the political dimensions of the Deoband movement see her introduction to Barbara D. Metcalf, *Islamic Contestations: Essays on Muslims in India and Pakistan* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2004). Metcalf’s otherwise pioneering work has suffered from a largely untheorized model of politics and the political. I will examine the consequences of this lacunae in Chapter 3. Zaman’s work by contrast constitutes a necessary methodological advance in the study of the South Asian ‘ulama. Since my understanding of history, the subject and society is rooted in Foucault’s work on power, I draw, but significantly depart, from Metcalf’s overall interpretation of the Deoband.

⁴⁴ B. Metcalf, "The Madrasa at Deoband: A Model for Religious Education in Modern India," *Modern Asian Studies* 12, no. 1 (1978).

⁴⁵ In chapter 3 I problematize this characterization of the Deoband as ‘traditionalist’.

⁴⁶ Introduction in Metcalf, *Islamic Contestations: Essays on Muslims in India and Pakistan*, p. xx.

⁴⁷ In her most recent work, Metcalf uses this term but does not flesh out its implications (Barbara D. Metcalf, *Husain Ahmad Madani: The Jihad for Islam and India's Freedom*, Makers of the Muslim World (Oneworld Publications, 2008). See the chapter, “Refashioning Identities” in Zaman for an account of this violent sectarian dimension of the Deoband (Zaman, *The ‘Ulama in Contemporary Islam: Custodians of Change*.) In later chapters I intend to show that the Deoband movement is essentially a biopolitical project rather than as Metcalf claims an apolitical inward pietistic movement of personal reform. For her recent attempts to grapple with the violent political nature of the Taliban Deobandis see Barbara D. Metcalf, "Traditionalist' Islamic Activism Deoband, Tablighis, and Talibs," in *Understanding September 11*, ed. Craig Calhoun, Paul Price, and Ashley Timmer (New York: The New Press, 2004).

Islam, to a distinct form of Muslim identity. Today the Deoband's Afghan and Pakistani based variants have attained global notoriety, principally because of the nexus between the Deoband and the Taliban.⁴⁸

Within the multiplicity of Islamist practices in Pakistan, the Deoband has emerged as one of the most highly organized and yet remarkably polycentric institutions that claim orthodox religious authority. I am arguing in this work that the Deoband 'ulama practices have undergone a series of dramatic transformations since 1947. I am characterizing these transformation primarily in terms of Foucault's grammars of power — governmentality, sovereignty, discipline, and biopolitics.⁴⁹ The 1979 Afghan-Soviet war marks a particularly significant threshold in this transformation; an event which led to the intensification of the conscription of 'ulama power within a broader set of military and geopolitical spaces. Though this the new military-mullah complex was a significant turning point, I am arguing that crucial elements of this transformation have been underway since the inception of the Islamic State in 1947. This transformation as I shall discuss, has also played itself out in the dramatic shifts within the institutional space of

⁴⁸ While it may not have been inaccurate to describe the Taliban as Afghan Deobandi's — or rather Afghan Students of Pakistani Deoband madrasas — in 1994 and 2001, today the Taliban is a more complex and multilayered phenomenon which has taken on distinct Pakhtun nationalist overtone. See Tariq Ali, *The Duel: Pakistan on the Flight Path of American Power* (Scribner, 2008), for the nationalist element, and also Antonio Giustozzi, *Koran, Kalashnikov, and Laptop: The Neo-Taliban Insurgency in Afghanistan* (New York: Columbia University Press, 2007). The link between the Deoband and the Taliban is therefore complex, and it would be to over simplify the former to make an unequivocal connection with the later. While one must be wary then of essentialism's and simplifications of the Deoband, it would also be inaccurate to say that the link is arbitrary or a mischaracterization. I take up this problematic in chapter 3.

⁴⁹ While there have now emerged a number of excellent works on the Deoband 'ulama and their institutions, none of them take a biopolitical approach — see for instance Jamal Malik, ed., *Madrasas in South Asia: Teaching Terror?* (London: Routledge, 2008), Muhammad Qasim Zaman, *Ashraf Ali Thanawi: Islam in Modern South Asia*, *Makers of the Muslim World* (Oneworld Publications, 2007), Robert W. Hefner and Muhammad Qasim Zaman, eds., *Schooling Islam: The Culture and Politics of Modern Education*, Princeton Studies in Muslim Politics (Princeton University Press, 2007), Sana Haroon, *Frontier of Faith: Islam in the Indo-Afghan Borderland*, Columbia/Hurst (Columbia University Press, 2007), Zaman, *The 'Ulama in Contemporary Islam: Custodians of Change*. I will further discuss some of these works in subsequent chapters.

‘ulama authority; the madrasa. Historically the madrasa within South Asia, has been an informal space for the dissemination of a variety of forms of Islamic learning (‘ilm).⁵⁰ By the 19th century however, especially with the emergence of the Deoband, it had become a more formal disciplinary space for the production of “pious” bodies and ‘ulama authority. As the expanding network of Deobandi *madaris* (religious schools) entered or were co-opted by other political arenas, these docile bodies have been increasingly deployed either for various state sponsored projects of “jihad”,⁵¹ or as militant cadres for the Deoband’s own increasingly autonomous yet fractured and internally feuding political movements; the Jam‘iyyat al-‘Ulama-i Islam (Society of Islamic ‘Ulama or JUI) and its various radical sectarian and jihadist offshoots like the *Sipah-i Sahaba* (SSP) and the Taliban. Thus, as “history of the present” the dissertation pays particular attention to the ruptures, displacements, and transformations of discourses on religion, identity and politics; transformations which I am suggesting should be understood principally in terms of subjectivation and biopoliticization.

In addition to thinking about the history and politics this important, and yet remarkably understudied Islamic organization, what I am aiming for here is the development of a more nuanced and critically receptive framework for the analysis of

⁵⁰ See Saiyid Naqi Husain Jafri, "A Modernist View of Madrasa Education in Late Mughal India," in *Islamic Education, Diversity and National Identity: Dini Madaris in India Post 9/11*, ed. Jan-Peter Hartung and Helmut Reifeld (SAGE Publications, 2006), Saiyid Zaheer Husain Jafri, "Madrasa and Khanaqah, or Madrasa in Khanaqah? Education and Sufi Establishments in Northern India " in *Islamic Education, Diversity and National Identity: Dini Madaris in India Post 9/11*, ed. Jan-Peter Hartung and Helmut Reifeld (SAGE Publications, 2006), and other essays in Jan-Peter Hartung and Helmut Reifeld, eds., *Islamic Education, Diversity and National Identity: Dini Madaris in India Post 9/11* (SAGE Publications, 2006). For an account of the *maktab* and madrasa tradition in India see also Yoginder Sikand, *Bastions of the Believers: Madrasas and Islamic Education in India* (Penguin Global, 2006).

⁵¹ Here I am of course referring to the mobilization of *Jihad international* by the US against the Soviets, and the use of these mujahideen forces by the Pakistan army after the Soviet withdrawal in both Afghanistan and India. For a good overview see Zahid Hussain, *Frontline Pakistan: The Struggle with Militant Islam* (Columbia University Press, 2007).

political space⁵² in Pakistan, a space that cannot neatly be divided between the secular and the religious. I am also convinced that a mere historical account, a *histoire*⁵³ of the ‘ulama, will fail to take account of the complex simultaneously global and subterranean nature of the political field in which the subjectivities and praxis of the Deoband ‘ulama are forged. For instance, there is without doubt a strong class dimension to the problem of the Taliban today, but it would be too simple to reduce the phenomenon of Islamist violence to the developmentalist failure’s of the postcolonial elite. As any casual observation of the sociological makeup of the vast majority of *talibs* within the Deoband *dini madaris* network will reveal, they belong very clearly to a subaltern class. The majority of the ‘ulama are themselves indeed subaltern.⁵⁴ The effective historical marginalization and subalternity of the ‘ulama are undoubtedly key factors in understanding the violent turn of the ‘ulama. There is also little doubt that ways in which General Zia ul-Haq’s “Islamization” decade, couple with the imbrication of the Pakistan

⁵² It is in fact a politico-theological space. For a sense of the critical importance of this syntagm see de Hent de Vries and Lawrence E. Sullivan, eds., *Political Theologies: Public Religions in a Post-Secular World* (Fordham University Press, 2006).

⁵³ A genealogy, or history of the present, proceeds with an implicit critique of historicism. In Chapter 2 I make this critique explicit, thereby setting the stage for the kind of theoretico-historical analysis of this work.

⁵⁴ On postcolonialism and subaltern historiography, see Ranajit Guha and Gayatri Chakravorty Spivak, eds., *Selected Subaltern Studies*, Essays from the 5 Volumes and a Glossary (Delhi: Oxford University Press, 1988), and Vinayak Chaturvedi, ed., *Mapping Subaltern Studies and the Postcolonial* (London: Verso, 2000). The fact that the originally Gramscian term subaltern derives from the name of a military rank is significant in our account of military space in Chapter 3. Both the postcolonial and subaltern are of course highly contested terms. But as Young notes, it is concerned with colonial history only to the extent that that history has determined the configurations and power structures of the present; Robert J. C. Young, *Postcolonialism: An Historical Introduction* (Oxford & Malden, MA: Blackwell Publishers, 2001), p. 4. The subaltern classes are generally marked as marginalized groups. The excess and surplus children who populate the madaris landscape are undoubtedly both marginalized and excluded. It is in part this marginalization which accounts for the turn of the ‘ulama towards violence. Though he does not quite use the term, Jamal Malik has already shown how the ‘ulama are drawn largely from the ranks of the rural and urban poor (Jamal Malik, *Colonialization of Islam: Dissolution of Traditional Institutions in Pakistan* (Lahore: Vanguard Press, 1996).) However because Malik does not make a distinction between authority and power, I depart significantly from his conclusion about the dissolution of tradition and authority. Instead it is a question of understanding the ways in which the Deoband reconstitute and shape the contours of an all ready ongoing and mutating “tradition” and how they forge new identities and create new spaces for authority and power.

Army and society in the Afghan war, have fundamentally altered the landscape of the political in Pakistan. However what I am suggesting here is that the phenomenon of political Islam must be seen as intimately bound up with the project of Pakistan itself — with its very metaphysics in fact. It is not a question of attempting to isolate some pure Islam and show how it has been corrupted by a series of political events. Nor is it a question of showing how modern political forms and vocabularies (the state the part, the nation etc) have been Islamized. What I am aiming for is something different. I seek to show how the very discursive regime of Islam is now fundamentally political, and how it is now always a discourse of power and subjectivization, even in cases where it declares itself as concerned solely with private, inward or moral self-improvement. As such the distinction between Islam as such, and the political as such, is untenable. Islam is today always already a *bios*. This indistinction between the political (public) and the spiritual (private) does not begin with the 1979 Soviet invasion of Afghanistan, nor even with the founding of Pakistan. While these events are thresholds of transformation, the historical shadow of biopolitics are longer, while simultaneously being both synchronic and diachronic. I will argue that it is in fact in the thought of ‘Allama Muhammad Iqbal (1877 – 1938), the spiritual founder of the South Asian Islamic State, that the *poiēsis* of Islam makes its paradigmatic and lethal confrontation with the *polis*, with the political. Iqbal’s work is an expression of this confrontation in which the political triumphs over the ethical (*polis* over *ēthos*). Iqbal does not initiate this confrontation but he gives it its most popularly received and powerful expression. If Pakistan is birthed in Iqbal’s imagination, Islam was laid to rest in his *khayal*.⁵⁵ It is in his poetry that Islam is most poignantly,

⁵⁵ Iqbal’s problematization of the West, and his desire for a certain liberation of Muslim minds and bodies from the long night of colonialism, left him vulnerable to the metaphysics that articulated both the state and

romantically and metaphysically linked to the absolute necessity of a modern state, albeit a state which rejects conventional ethno-racial and linguistic basis for national identity.⁵⁶ Pakistan's history might hence be written as nothing but the effect of the impossible territorialization of Islam⁵⁷ — the transference of divine sovereignty to the state and the subsequent sacralization of the collective Muslim body (*ummah*).

Without a sense of this transformation, the nature of the crisis that envelops Pakistan, if not the globe, will remain hidden as we search in vain for a more descriptive and causal — or what Foucault called “genetic” — explanation.⁵⁸ The transformation consists in part of a double and simultaneous process: the “statification” (*étatisation*) of Islam and Muslim society, and the ‘governmentalization’ of the Islamic state.⁵⁹ Hence

the biopolitical form. The united ummah is then deployed as a weapon in potentia, a mass of bodies, against the power of the west, and in fashioning and imagining this power Iqbal allowed the biopolitical underbelly of his new weapon to colonize the very structure he was fashioning against the west (i.e. *umma*)

⁵⁶ I will discuss Iqbal in the final chapter. See however his famous *Reconstruction* for an elaboration of his political thought; Allama Muhammad Iqbal, *The Reconstruction of Religious Thought in Islam* (Lahore: Iqbal Academy Pakistan, 1989). For the classic formulation of nationalism's *raison d'être* see Ernest Renan's “What is a Nation?” in Geoff Eley and Ronald Grigor Suny, eds., *Becoming National: A Reader* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1996). Pakistan's founder, Muhammad ‘Ali Jinnah, often deployed Renan's racist/biopolitical logic in justifying his two nation theory. See the final chapter.

⁵⁷ And in this way also a history of its exception. Without getting ahead of ourselves, Agamben writes that the state of exception is the “principle of every juridical localization, since only the state of exception *opens the space in which the determination of a certain juridical order and a particular territory first becomes possible*.” Agamben, *Homo Sacer: Sovereign Power and Bare Life*, p. 19, italics mine

⁵⁸ For a critique of the genetic mode of historical analysis see Michel Foucault, “Nietzsche, Genealogy, History,” in *The Essential Foucault: Selections from Essential Works of Foucault, 1954-1984*, ed. Paul Rabinow and Nikolas Rose (New York: The New Press, 2003), and Mitchell Dean, *Critical and Effective Histories: Foucault's Methods and Historical Sociology* (London & New York: Routledge, 1994).

⁵⁹ The term *étatisation* is from Foucault's widely read governmentality lecture in Michel Foucault, *Security, Territory, Population*, Lectures at the College De France 1977 - 1978 (Palgrave Macmillan, 2007), p 87 – 114. For Foucault, “government” refers to relations between self and self, between communities and social institutions, as well as to the exercise of political sovereignty. Unlike Marxists he avoided “State Theory” which attempts to deduce the modern activities of government from essential properties of the state. Precisely because Foucault was interested in governmentality as an activity or “practice” that goes beyond the formal state object, we can similarly frame the exercise of political power by the ‘ulama as a form of governmentality. Foucault used the term ‘rationality of government’ interchangeably with the ‘art of government’. We are concerned here therefore with the arts (*technē*) of ‘ulama governmentality. Like Wahabism then which has influenced the more recent theological comportments of the Deoband, the Taliban is an expression of Islam as *police*. See the introduction in Colin Gordon, Graham Burchell, and Peter Miller, eds., *The Foucault Effect: Studies in Governmentality* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1991). Given the limited ways in which the governmentality paradigm is often deployed, in particular its

‘ulama religio-political practices must be situated across a series of complex historical and political horizons. We must in short recognize how ‘ulama practice have been essentially imbricated within the historically variable relations of power and the contingencies of Pakistan’s fractured politics, rather than as an outgrowth or mutation of some static tradition. This approach can in part account for the ways in which Deoband “Islamic” discourses (on nationalism, the state, authority, gender, minorities, citizenship) have shifted over time.⁶⁰

It should also be mentioned at the outset that not all political formations under ‘ulama tutelage can be framed within the rubric of ‘extremism’ ‘violence’ or ‘radical Islamism.’ Certainly a very large component of the Deoband phenomenon is manifested in the phenomenon of the Tabligh-i Jama‘at, which is a self-consciously “non-political” expression of Islam.⁶¹ However this understanding is in keeping with a very narrow and limited definition of politics and the political.⁶² However it is of course understandable that it is this militant and “uncivil” dimension of the traditionalist ‘ulama that has garnered most interest, in particular given the centrality of radical Islam in framing

divorce from his concept of biopolitics, I will discuss the relationship between the two more extensively in Chapter 2.

⁶⁰ For instance with respect to gender, a number of religious parties backed Fatima Jinnah’s candidacy when she ran against General Ayub Khan, whilst some of the same groups were opposed in principle to female leadership in the case of Benazir Bhutto. See Khawar Mumtaz and Farida Shaheed, *Women of Pakistan: Two Steps Forward, One Step Back?* (London & Atlantic Highlands, NJ: Zed Books, 1987), and Deniz Kandiyoti, ed., *Women, Islam and the State*, Women in the Political Economy (Philadelphia: Temple University Press, 1991).

⁶¹ This kind of problematic claim of being non-political or a-political is of course characteristic of the Tabligh-i Jama‘at. For the definitive account that echoes this characterization see Muhammad Khalid Masud, ed., *Travellers in Faith: Studies of the Tablighi Jama‘at as a Transnational Islamic Movement for Faith Renewal*, vol. 69, Social, Economic, and Political Studies of the Middle East and Asia (Leiden & Boston: E.J. Brill, 2000).

⁶² Certainly the Tabligh can be subject to an analysis in terms of power, for they most clearly exhibit a form of governmentality — “conduct of conduct” — their key role is the fashioning of a particular kind of Muslim subject. Recently in the wake of terrorist violence, the Annual gathering of the Tabligh-i Jama‘at in Raiwand included a number of demonstrations and protests against all forms of violence and terrorism (See the report “Taliban under fire from Pakistan’s faithful”, *Dawn* 15 Nov, 2009).

neoliberal and neoconservative constituent other. But here also an understanding of the radicalization of segments of the ‘ulama, their turn towards violent forms of political activism, and their increasingly militant policing of the boundaries of Islam, must also be set within further contextual parameters. The first is the imbrication of Islamist groups within the simultaneously repressive and enabling role of the State. Secondly, given that the Pakistani State, in conjunction with the United States and Saudi Arabia, has consistently attempted to infiltrate, control and harness orthodox Islamic institutions, due importance must be placed upon the larger structure of empire in making possible domestic economies of violence and power in which certain forms of “indigenous” jihadist violence are valorized and sustained.⁶³ These larger geo-political attempts to deploy and manipulate “Islam” and Islamist forces for the legitimization of martial rule and for the waging of proxy wars (Afghanistan and Kashmir), resulted in the artificial political empowerment of groups like the Deoband. Under the catalyst of these state interventions, the otherwise politically marginal communities of Islamic orthodoxy, who, if Metcalf is correct, were traditionally focused on scholarship, piety and quiet social reform (*daw‘a* and *tabligh*), have nonetheless transformed themselves into agents of *jihad* and brokers of increased socio-political power.⁶⁴ While the comportment towards state power, and more broadly, governmentality, among the ‘ulama cannot solely be read as an effect of Empire or the postcolonial state, Cold War cartography certainly fostered the conditions of possibility for the effective transformation of an ‘ulama republic fantasy into political possibility. A feature supposedly characteristic of fundamentalist or Islamist

⁶³ Timothy Mitchell, "Mcjihad: Islam in the U.S. Global Order," *Social Text* 20, no. 4 - 73 (2002).

⁶⁴ But neither the colonial or postcolonial state can be said to originary causes of ‘ulama governmentality.

groups,⁶⁵ namely the desire for state power, can now equally be said to be true of ‘traditionalist’ ‘ulama led Islamist groups. As such the standard typological distinctions of Muslim politics⁶⁶ — Islamist/fundamentalist, modernist, traditionalist — have entered a zone of indistinction.⁶⁷ Our analytic gaze must hence take into consideration the material and discursive effects of power of a new kind of colonial/imperial present,⁶⁸ exercised in the name of a variety of global and universalist legitimating discourses, (democracy, freedom, “Western civilization”, etc). Arguably this overlapping of Imperial desire and Islamist fantasy continues to provide a mutually reinforcing dialectic that is central to the technologies of American imperial ambitions both in Iraq and more globally.

Broadly speaking I regard the terms “Deoband”, and by extension the “Taliban” as suggesting a fictional unity. The singular signifier of course gestures to multiple signifieds. These phenomenon then should be viewed instead as a complex series of intersecting and overlapping *dispositifs*, as assemblages or formations of power. The Taliban must be understood as a dense intersection point of a competing set of multiform powers, themselves exercising an unlimited sovereign right of death, an all-powerful monstrosity, reflective equally of the violent political space which gave it birth.

⁶⁵ This is the kind of typology that Roy deploys; Olivier Roy, *The Failure of Political Islam*, trans. Carol Volk (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1994).

⁶⁶ Dale F. Eickelman and James Piscatori, *Muslim Politics*, Princeton Studies in Muslim Politics (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1996).

⁶⁷ As such these distinctions, while of rough and ready usefulness, are no longer, if indeed they ever were, analytically tenable. Most scholarship on political Islam, including Zaman and Metcalf, continue to make these distinctions (Barbara D. Metcalf, "Traditionalist' Islamic Activism Deoband, Tablighis, and Talibs," in *Islamic Contestations: Essays on Muslims in India and Pakistan* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2004), and ———, "Islamic Arguments in Contemporary Pakistan," in *Islam and the Political Economy of Meaning: Comparative Studies of Muslim Discourse*, ed. William R. Roff, *Comparative Studies on Muslim Societies* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1987).

⁶⁸ The term is used in Gregory’s excellent study; Derek Gregory, *The Colonial Present: Afghanistan, Palestine, Iraq* (Blackwell Publishers, 2004).

Historical Thresholds of Sovereignty

Three catastrophes serve as the contextual historical matrix for my concern with the biopolitical space of Islam: 1947 (the emergence of postcolonial Pakistan), 1979 (the Iranian Revolution and the Soviet Invasion of Afghanistan) and 2001 (the point at which these two dates converge on the United States). If politics were astrology, and sovereignties were heavenly bodies, then these years were surely the moments of inaugural shifts and destinal realignments within the fabric of the global *cosmopolis* — disturbances whose fateful (eventful) reverberations still cast their pale and threatening shadow over our time. The metacolonial attempts a disclosure of the *topology* of this time, seeking to capture a few of the shadows cast by the haunting movement of this present/presence as it plays itself out, recklessly, on the landscape of religion and politics in Pakistan and Afghanistan. I will briefly outline the ways in which these years mark significant biopolitical thresholds.

1947 is of course the year of a violent cesarean birth, and the subsequent bloody separation of oddly conjoined triplets who had been gestating in colonialism's womb since at least 1857. The post-partition surgery was inept, and incomplete, and the sad saga of this trauma continues to haunt the national destinies of India, Pakistan. 1971, the emergence of Bangladesh, was merely the completion of this originary biopolitical fracture — the ceaseless separation of *bios* and *zoē*. More critically, as a topological site for this study, 1947 marks the birth of the first Nation-State that comes into being under the sign of a mobilized Islam — a Muslim Republic, an *Islamapolis*, but not yet an Islamic State. Ironically as I shall seek to demonstrate, Pakistan — whose name derives as a bemused acronym of colonial provinces, and whose *raison d'être* was perhaps

acrimony (*ressentiment*) itself — exemplifies what Nietzsche called the spirit of revenge; the revenge of History not just against colonialism or the West, but against Islam itself.⁶⁹ As such Pakistan will be thought here as both a geographic, imaginative and metaphysical apparatus.

Just under 33 years later, 1979 marks the birth and gestation of another pair of awkward Islamo-political entities, conceived yet again through the romantic misadventures of Imperial desire; the Iranian revolution and the birth of the Afghan Mujahideen and the Jihad International. If 1857 can be regarded as the first major counterstrike of new forms of local sovereignty against British colonialism, 1979 Iran marks the first exemplary counterstrike of Muslim sovereignty directed against the American empire. The long *duree* of American involvement in Afghanistan should thus be seen as directed not only towards its arch imperial rival the Soviet Union, but also against Iran, combining in one space a key and longstanding component American foreign policy; hostility towards revolutionary nationalism.⁷⁰

But more significantly, as a key contextual moment of the metacolonial, we can reconfigure the primary thrust of the Iranian revolution as directed against the deep historical trajectory and traditions of Shi‘i Islam itself; the *Ayatollah*, literally the ‘sign of

⁶⁹ In the extensive four volume *Nietzsche* lectures — lectures as I shall note which were decisive for Foucault — Heidegger suggests that Nietzsche’s primary thought of the will to power could not be interpreted in isolation from his other key doctrines of eternal recurrence, nihilism and the Übermensch (super- or over- man). On Heidegger’s reading, Eternal Recurrence effectively signifies the desire of the human subject to stamp (and thus preclude) Being in its singularity and flux, with the mark of *logos* as presence and permanence (Martin Heidegger, *Nietzsche: Volumes One and Two* (HarperOne, 1991), p 201.) Zarathustra’s most succinct formulation of the eternal recurrence — “the will’s revulsion against time and its ‘It was’ ” (———, *What Is Called Thinking?*, trans. J. Glenn Gray (New York: Harper & Row, Perennial Library, 1968), p 93.) — signals the spirit of revenge (*ressentiment*). In this way, metaphysically, Pakistan is that which fixes and invariably subordinates Islam to its provincial geography and its limited political sovereignty. Pakistan’s requirement was too ensure the predictability, codification and security of that which cannot be secured and predicted. It can be said then that Pakistan, which seeks to formally conflate purity (*pak*) with the *polis*, ensures the creation of a conflictual negative space, whose essential spirit is nihilism. Islam’s ethical possibilities are thus extinguished in an Islamic State, in the *Islamapolis*.

⁷⁰ Michael H. Hunt, *Ideology and U.S Foreign Policy* (Yale University Press, 1988).

God', is now made to appear as the actual sovereign of a new political space, a space where what was once hidden, the *ghaybah* of the imam, becomes actualized. As Agamben notes "sovereign power can ... maintain itself indefinitely, without ever passing over into actuality. (*The troublemaker is precisely the one who tries to force sovereign power to translate itself into actuality.*)"⁷¹ Thus the sovereign authority of God that was once in occultation, is now captured and subsumed within the new *Islamapolis*. In this way the Iranian Revolution, inaugurates not only the first "Islamic" State, it marks also the proper *homecoming* of political Islam. The radical doctrine of *wilayat al-faqih* — the direct rule, or sovereignty, of the jurist — that undergirded the rise to state power of the ayatollahs, is a decisive turning point in the historical relationship between Islam, the 'ulama and the political, in short between knowledge (*'ilm*) and power. If it can be accurately said that in early Islamic societies, *nomos* and rule did not coincide, then the Iranian Revolution is indeed a truly modern revolution. The Islamic revolution as a specifically political revolution, marks the involution of Islam itself: Islam comes to replace Allah. This entry of Islam — and its concomitant form of Muslim subjectivity — into modern political power, marks the hollowing and decline of Islam which is now everywhere apparent. 1947 the birth of Pakistan and the 1979 Iranian revolution are thus key markers in this transition.

But there were other nefarious convergences that suborn this year as the crucial biopolitical threshold for political Islam. 1979 in particular, saw not only the brutal conflagration of imperial powers in Afghanistan, it also witnessed a decisive *event* of power in Pakistan. On the 4th of April, behind the fortified walls of Rawalpindi's

⁷¹ Agamben, *Homo Sacer: Sovereign Power and Bare Life*. The passage goes on to say: "Instead one must think the existence of potentiality without any relation to Being in the form of actuality."

infamous Adiyala Jail (and just a few months before Soviet tanks rolled into Kabul) by order of Chief Martial Law Administrator Zia ul-Haq (1924–88), the Pakistan military hangs Prime Minister Z. A. Bhutto, effectively decapitating the symbol (however flawed) of democracy in Pakistan. The sordid alliance that subsequently ensues between the ISI, the CIA and the House of Saudi, inaugurates what we may call the *Great American Jihad*; a paradoxical proxy crusade that may go down in history as the most costly, misguided, foul and shortsightedly successful *ménage à trois*, of the 20th century. The immediate offspring of this multi-lateral imperial *dispositif*, the Mujahideen, were hailed not only with massive injections of cash, heroin and arms, but also with ethico-political accolades; when a select few representatives of these warriors of Islam were greeted in Washington and knighted by Reagan as the “moral equivalents of our Founding Fathers”.⁷² There is undoubtedly a degree of truthful irony in this convergence; one exemplary practitioner of a puritanical project recognizing his own exceptionalist face in the nascent forces of *jihadism*.⁷³

The events set in motion in 1979 thus mark the beginning of the end of one Imperial foe, and the birth of another.⁷⁴ And in what can only be a strange imprint of the call of enframing around which these assemblages have gathered and proliferated, we can hear the echo of technology and the structure of exception in the very names of these entities; al-Qaeda which derives its organizational name not only from the Arabic word *qā'idah* (foundation or base) but also is a reference to the very computer database of

⁷² Eqbal Ahmad, David Barsamian, and Greg Ruggiero, *Terrorism: Theirs and Ours* (Open Media, 2001).

⁷³ As we have no learned from numerous accounts, Z. Brezinsky, Zia ul-Haq, and Prince Faisal Turki had been breeding these jihadist forces prior to the actual Soviet Invasion. That many of these children have multiplied and have returned to devour their fathers, in indeed a fitting tribute to Freud's *Totem and Taboo*.

⁷⁴ A transition which in the minds of its imperial architects could be thought of as one from “Mad-Russia” to “Mad-Rasah.”

names which was kept in Peshawar to keep track of the Arab-Afghan Greater Jihad conscripts. In the name al-Qaeda is thus embedded a simultaneous reference to the foundations of Islam and a military or computer database. And in the Taliban and the Deoband, we again hear the very structure of exception, the *ban*, which this work, following Agamben, seeks to disclose.⁷⁵

If 1979 was significant for the fortunes of political Islam, (from Palestine to Pakistan) it was also the crucial decade for the new visibility of other forms of religio-biopolitics. Here we may mention, in addition to the emergence of the BJP in India, the rise of the Christian Coalition and its alliance with neoliberalism⁷⁶ and neoconservatism in the US. The second Iraq war could in this sense be viewed as a direct product of this liaison. Political Christianity, or “Christianism”⁷⁷ arose in part out of the Christian Reconstructionist movement and the various forms of Dominionism in the U.S. This movement was influenced by the Calvinist theology of R. J. Rushdoony whose work was popularized by Francis Schaefer, and laid the groundwork for the rise to power of figures like Pat Robertson whose failed bid for direct political (sovereign) power in 1989 eventually morphed into a more grass roots (governmentality) operation — birthing the Christian Coalition, an organization which remains a decisive constituent of the Republican Base, and which critics had suggested had virtually overtaken the functioning

⁷⁵ If this dissertation were permitted a Haiku form it could be rendered simply as *Tali-ban*. If this thesis has merit, then it could be said that the Taliban are an exemplary joke, a cosmic pun!

⁷⁶ More significantly, from the perspective of an emerging global governmentality, 1979 is also the year around which the explicit opening shots of neoliberalism were fired across the globe. See David Harvey, *A Brief History of Neoliberalism* (Oxford University Press, 2005). Thus it was the year not only for the creation and opening of new political spaces, but also the final collapse of the economic into the political, a process that has itself hastened the vast proliferation of multiple zones of indistinction.

⁷⁷ In lieu of the term ‘Christian fundamentalism’ I prefer the term Christianism because it highlights its multi-fold equivalence with Islamism. The various strands of political Christianity, have distinct parallels and similarities with political Islam in terms of the spectrum of positions viz-a-viz religious law and its relationship to the state. Rushdoony’s *Institutes of Biblical Law* is even more to the right of Mawdudi’s religio-political views, and would align itself close to Taliban doctrine in terms of its logic of exceptionalism.

of the Republican party during the Regan and Bush I years. (see Theocracy Watch and Hedges). As will be apparent there is a distinct parallel between these forms of Christianity fundamentalism and that of the Deoband 'ulama in that they both seek to create a space of sovereign operations (focused on the body and sexuality — gay rights, abortion) as a way to counteract the hegemony of liberal secularism. The latent sentiment, “Christianity/America in Danger”, so remarkably captured with the wild popularity of Mel Gibson’s *The Passions of Christ*, parallels the concern of Islamists for whom Islam (Muslim Society) “must be defended”.⁷⁸ 1979 thus clearly inaugurated a decade of a new assertion of a range of political theologies, no longer disguised in the familiar garments of secular sovereignty. It is thus not the case of an old medieval religious specter returning to haunt the liberal pretensions of modernities otherwise progressive historical *telos*, but something quite the reverse; the becoming historical, or the Hegelianation of religion itself.

In this way 1979 Afghanistan can be seen not only as the place where the grand dénouement of the Cold War unfolds, but also as the vital threshold for the biopolitical capture of Islam, and the transition point into the age of Terror and Security,⁷⁹ which announced its conclusive arrival with the event of September 11, 2001. The subsequent convergence then between neoliberalism and neoconservatism, which advocates a far more moralistic and sovereigntist modality of power, constitutes the critical biopolitical

⁷⁸ Michel Foucault, *Society Must Be Defended*, Lectures at the College De France, 1975-1976 (Picador, 2003), Foucault, *Security, Territory, Population*.

⁷⁹ Mark Neocleous, *Critique of Security*, Research Methods for the Arts (Edinburgh University Press, 2008).

matrix in which the analysis of political Islam's present must proceed. In short then, Afghanistan marks the crucial threshold of the biopolitical age of terror⁸⁰ we now inhabit.

The abysmal, spectral figure to emerge from the convergence of these three historical vectors is the Taliban — the *Muselmann*, not as witness of Auschwitz, but rather the *shaheed* of Afghanistan. As Agamben notes, Primo Levi described the most abject figures of the Nazi concentration camps as *der Muselmann* (the Muslim) — “a being from whom humiliation, horror, and fear had so taken away all consciousness and all personality as to make him absolutely apathetic.”⁸¹ Today the Taliban stand as the exemplary figure of Muslim life that does not deserve to live. The Taliban however are *homo sacer* with Kalashnikovs, and in this way exemplify the proximity between sacred life and sovereign power. A heretical reading, one that troubles liberal sensibilities, discloses the Taliban phenomenon as an exemplary and double instance of the sovereign paradox.⁸²

Emerging from the post-apocalyptic wreckage of US-Soviet imperial rivalry in Afghanistan, the Taliban were effectively spawned by yet another alliance between the secretive security apparatus of Pakistan's ‘military intelligence’, and the Deoband ‘ulama. This Mullah-Military complex, as I hope to demonstrate, is key to understanding the discourse and practice of the Deoband ‘ulama as biopolitical. Perhaps more troublingly, the Taliban combine two of Agamben's key biopolitical paradigms, the camp and the refugee. During the first period of the Afghan catastrophe, between 1979 and

⁸⁰ Reid, *The Biopolitics of the War on Terror: Life Struggles, Liberal Modernity and the Defence of Logistical Societies*, Dillon, *The Liberal Way of War: The Martial Face of Global Biopolitics*, and Elizabeth Dauphinee and Christina Masters, eds., *The Logics of Biopower and the War on Terror: Living, Dying, Surviving* (Palgrave Macmillan, 2006).

⁸¹ Agamben, *Homo Sacer: Sovereign Power and Bare Life*, p. 185.

⁸² As Agamben reminds us “the paradox of sovereignty consists in the fact that the sovereign is, at the same time, outside and inside the juridical order.” Ibid., p. 25.

1988, thousands of camps were set up across the Afghan-Pakistan border to house the influx of some 4 – 5 million refugees.⁸³ These camps were thus born out of a situation of crisis, martial law and war. The *madaris* that proliferated in conjunction with these camps, functioned as a disciplinary holding and training space for surplus children. The camp, as Agamben notes, is “the pure, absolute, and impassable biopolitical space (insofar as it is founded solely on the state of exception)”. The camp thus appears as an event, the hidden paradigm that decisively signals the political space of modernity itself. Eminently *torturable* and *bombable*, the Taliban mirror the long history of global and local forms of sovereign violence through their own will to decapitation, and through a range of other less intense enactments of radical control over the body. The strict and obsessive reinforcement of gender boundaries between males (beards) and females (veils) is itself an instance of an emaciated sovereign logic, which substitutes control over territorial space for control over the body and social space.

Despite the fact that the presence and continuity of Taliban ideology is viewed with embarrassment by Muslims worldwide, it simultaneously grounds the governmental logics for the “War on Terror.” Hence 1979 Afghanistan/Pakistan can be seen not only as the time-place where the grand dénouement of the Cold War unfolds, but also as the vital threshold for the biopolitical capture of Islam, and the transition point into the age of ‘Terror and Security’, which announced its conclusive arrival with the event of September 11, 2001. A misrecognition of this space as a merely geopolitical (or Islamic) crisis — one of incompetent nation building, imperial mischief, or incompetent textual interpretation — rather than as an exemplary space of emergency, may obscure the way

⁸³ “The refugee must be considered for what he is: nothing less than a limit concept that radically calls into question the fundamental categories of the nation-state.” Ibid., p. 134.

in which the crisis in Afghanistan/Pakistan presages a severe ontological crisis yet to come; the darkest apotheosis of the emergency of being in whose nihilistic time and *polis* we already dwell. Perhaps this is the kind of dark space which ought to become the inducement for a way of thinking past the conventional limits of the disciplines. Failure to do so, Agamben warns with his haunting last three words of *Homo Sacer* runs the risk of an *unprecedented biopolitical catastrophe*. What follows here, is a labor of thinking under the weight of this immanent failure.

Islamapolis

Throughout the work, and especially in the final chapter on the ummah, I deploy the syntagm “*Islamapolis*”, a configuration with multiple but interrelated significations, which unfold along several interconnected registers. *Islamapolis* can be seen as a short hand that encapsulates the metacolonial ethos, and in this way the entire thesis. On the one hand it loosely translates “Islam-*abad*”, where *abad*, and *abadi*, refer to settlement and population. In this sense *Islam-a-polis* is simply the ‘city of Islam’, the nation of an Islamic population. Along another register, that of process, *Islamapolis* names Islam’s discursive articulation and material imbrication within systems of modern power; its encounter and folding within ‘the political’ — the space of the *polis*. What is critical however is the way in which, through this encounter, it becomes *apolis* — homeless, uncanny. *Islamapolis* also signifies the ways in which contemporary articulations of Islam are subsequently infected by the onto-logic of sovereign power. *Islamapolis* thus marks the biopoliticization of Islam: the mechanisms, technologies and strategies by which power over life manifests itself in Muslim discourses, practices and politics. The

Islamapolis is thus an exemplary metacolonial apparatus, a space which signals the simultaneous hollowing and hallowing of Islam. The attempt in this work is to offer a cartography of the *Islamapolis*.

Chapter II

The Space of Genealogy: Political Islam, Biopolitics and the Metacolonial

In this chapter I would like to suggest that thinking political Islam genealogically of necessity entails certain theoretico-historical commitments. The work of Talal Asad and his students represent most paradigmatically in my view, a direction which initiates a move towards genealogical thinking.⁸⁴ Foucault's genealogy is both a form of historical realism and also a radical critique of the dominant forms of historicist understanding. Foucault's genealogical inquiries were designed in part to disrupt the progressivist assumptions embedded in western narratives about modernity and truth. I will argue that a genuinely interdisciplinary approach to history opens up potentially new horizons in our understanding of political Islam, horizons that are not constrained by the limits of chronology⁸⁵ and the series of ideologies which have thus far dominated our analytic of contemporary Islamist violence; the largely humanist paradigms of liberal and Marxist scholarship. After a brief survey of the contemporary literature that takes political Islam as its primary thematic, I will outline the key paradigms of this genealogical study and

⁸⁴ My own approach is indebted to Asad's innovations, but my interest here is in advancing this shift.

⁸⁵ As Hayden White has so elegantly demonstrated chronology provides a rubric for understanding, but it is not understanding itself. The only meaning that history can have is the kind that the narrative imagination gives to it. See in particular his chapter on Foucault "The Historiography of Anti-Humanism" in Hayden White, *The Content of the Form: Narrative Discourse and Historical Representation* (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 1987).

articulate the ways in which this work seeks to depart from most of the critical paradigms characteristic of the field.⁸⁶

Beyond Orientalism and the Politics of Representation

The study of Islam and Muslim societies in the Western academy has historically been situated within and animated by concerns of war, conquest, domination and control.⁸⁷ It was however with Foucault's paradigm of knowledge/power — disseminated most eloquently by Edward Said in his classic 1978 work *Orientalism*⁸⁸ — that the academic study of Muslim cultures and history was placed on an entirely new footing.⁸⁹ Said's path breaking *Orientalism* presented the "West" with a very unflattering image of itself, uncovering the nefarious politics of the way the West represented its subject colonies and its own self-image in relation to them. His work undeniably opened up

⁸⁶ One does not have to offer critique in order to be against, but rather only in the hopes of thinking differently and otherwise. Needless to say I am indebted to the existing critical literature which serve as my point of departure.

⁸⁷ For an excellent historical overview see Norman Daniel, *Islam and the West: The Making of an Image*, Rev. ed. (Oxford: Oneworld Publications, 1993). After the demise of the communist threat in the 1990's and still prior to 2001, there was a distinct sense in academic circles that the 'green menace' of Islam was replacing the 'red' threat of Soviet communism. The many voices seeking to counter this trend found themselves outdone in an instant by the genius stroke of Al-Qaeda. (See for instance Bruce B. Lawrence, *Shattering the Myth: Islam Beyond Violence*, Princeton Studies in Muslim Politics (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1998), John L. Esposito, *The Islamic Threat: Myth or Reality?* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1992), Jochen Hippler and Andrea Lueg, eds., *The Next Threat: Western Perceptions of Islam*, Transnational Institute Series (London: Pluto Press, Transnational Institute, 1995). However despite their attempts to contextualize Islam, all these authors tend to assume the existence of some underlying essence of Islam that is the basis for Muslim belief and political praxis.

⁸⁸ Edward W. Said, *Orientalism* (New York: Vintage Books, Random House, 1979). At the end of the day however Said's deployment of Foucault was both limited and superficial. Because Said's work was held up as a model for the deployment of knowledge/power, the net effect was the circulation of a distilled and de-radicalized Foucault. For an important critique see William V. Spanos, *The Legacy of Edward W. Said* (University of Illinois Press, 2009). For an earlier critique see Brennan, Timothy "The Illusion of a Future: 'Orientalism' as Traveling Theory," *Critical Inquiry*, Vol. 26, No. 3 (Spring, 2000), pp. 558-583.

⁸⁹ Doubtless there have been influences other than Foucault, but I will claim that it is his rethinking of power that has yielded the greatest impact on critical approaches to the study of society, history and politics.

entire new ways of political analysis by showing how the presumed autonomous field of culture was implicated in deplorable political realities. However, what was lacking in Said's early account was an analysis of the responses from the 'other' side. Said had shown us what the imperial powers and their moral self-understanding looked like from the point of view of the disempowered other, but one got the sense that this other was silent and inactive while its territories and its identity were being distorted beyond recognition.⁹⁰

In parallel to Said's work, the much heralded "Twilight of Subjectivity"⁹¹ inaugurated by post-structuralism, has also become a dominant focus of concern among a cross-disciplinary spectrum of contemporary academics. For scholars interested in the cultural and political history of 'marginal' and 'subordinate', 'non-European' peoples, the discrediting of a dominant characteristic of post-Enlightenment modernity— subject-centered reason— has opened up a number of interesting (albeit problematic) horizons.⁹² An awareness of the self-aggrandizing nature of the modern subject, has not only unmasked the will to power behind enlightenment claims of epistemic and moral sovereignty, it has also helped illuminate the ways in which these claims have been coded and enshrined in various historiographies and institutional practices. The discovery of the essential link between knowledge, culture and power, exposed the seemingly

⁹⁰ A major aim of Said's *Culture & Imperialism* was to set aside this imbalance. Edward W. Said, *Culture and Imperialism*, Vintage (New York: Alfred A. Knopf, 1993).

⁹¹ Fred R. Dallmayr, *Twilight of Subjectivity: Contributions to a Post-Individualist Theory of Politics* (Amherst: University of Massachusetts Press, 1981).

⁹² Eduardo Cadava, Peter Connor, and Jean-Luc Nancy, *Who Comes after the Subject ?* (London & New York: Routledge, 1992).

disinterested claims of colonial and imperial scholarship, birthing entirely new disciplines which are now part of the academic landscape.⁹³

The identification and critique of “misrepresentations” have now become increasingly persistent themes in academic writings on Islam, with ever more sophisticated theoretical systems being deployed to describe the insidiousness, *modus operandi* and hegemony of such misrepresentations. It might be fair to say that an Orientalist epistemology has almost completely been eradicated within most respectable social science, humanities and area studies programs in the U.S.⁹⁴ However the power and prevalence of simplifying representations in the western media and in Islamist discourse is such that they both continue to dominate the public sphere.⁹⁵ The exorcised demon of the paradigmatic Orientalist, Bernard Lewis,⁹⁶ continues thus to haunt the halls

⁹³ I have in mind here obviously both postcolonial studies and cultural studies. Particularly influential for my own intellectual formation was the interdisciplinary program of history and anthropology at the University of Michigan. The culture/power/history series is representative of this important trend. See Nicholas B. Dirks, Geoff Eley, and Sherry B. Ortner, eds., *Culture/ Power/ History: A Reader in Contemporary Social Theory*, Princeton Studies in Culture/Power/History (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1994).

⁹⁴ Which is why when it first appeared Al-Azmeh’s work was seen as an exciting intervention in the ongoing debate on philosophical and political representations of Islam; Aziz al-Azmeh, *Islams and Modernities*, 1st ed., Phronesis (London & New York: Verso, 1993). The continued profusion of works indebted to the critique of orientalism and representations of Islam is of course testament to the transformed nature of the academy. See for instance Zachary Lockman, *Contending Visions of the Middle East: The History and Politics of Orientalism*, The Contemporary Middle East (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2004), Melani McAlister, *Epic Encounters: Culture, Media, and U.S. Interests in the Middle East, 1945-2000*, ed. Earl Lewis and George Lipsitz, vol. 6, American Crossroads (Berkeley: University of California Press, 2004), Timothy Marr, *The Cultural Roots of American Islamicism* (Cambridge University Press, 2006). as some of the more recent examples. However despite obvious advances, many senior scholars of the “Orient” continue to offer reservations about the dominant epistemologies of scholarly critique. I will consider Asad’s work below, but see also Harry Harootunian, *History’s Disquiet: Modernity, Cultural Practice, and the Question of Everyday Life*, The Wellek Library Lecture Series at the University of California, Irvine (New York: Columbia University Press, 2000), and Rey Chow, *The Age of the World Target: Self-Referentiality in War, Theory, and Comparative Work*, Next Wave Provocations (Duke University Press, 2006).

⁹⁵ For a critique of this trend see Karim H. Karim, *The Islamic Peril: Media and Global Violence*, Updated ed. (Montreal & New York: Black Rose Books, 2003).

⁹⁶ Lewis’s recent books continued to be best sellers for the post-911 American public who were naturally craving more ‘serious’ analysis Islam and politics Bernard Lewis, *What Went Wrong? The Clash between Islam and Modernity in the Middle East*, 1st Perennial ed. (New York: Perennial, 2003), ———, *Islam and the West* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1993).

of political science departments, the media, public opinion and of course public policy.⁹⁷ Former president G.W. Bush's entire foreign policy apparatus, ideologically rooted in neoconservatism,⁹⁸ took what little scholarly credentials it had from the Orientalist paradigm.

Political Islam: From Fundamentalism to Islamism

From the earlier sensationalist and essentialist depictions of a monolithic and militant Islam on the move,⁹⁹ there now have emerged a number of significant studies of Muslim politics that have emphasized complexity and variety and have paid attention to the particular socio-political and economic conditions that would more accurately situate our understanding of this heterogeneous phenomenon.¹⁰⁰ Most of these studies however remained mired in various forms of reification and objectification.¹⁰¹

⁹⁷ For a recent critique of the return of Orientalism, see Emran Qureshi and Michael A. Sells, *The New Crusades: Constructing the Muslim Enemy* (Columbia University Press, 2003).

⁹⁸ For an excellent Foucaultian critique of neoconservatism see Majia Nadesan, *Governmentality, Biopower, and Everyday Life* (Routledge, 2008). For other important critiques of neoconservatism see Nicholas Xenos, *Cloaked in Virtue: Unveiling Leo Strauss and the Rhetoric of American Foreign Policy* (Routledge, 2007), Gary Dorrien, *Imperial Designs: Neoconservatism and the New Pax Americana* (London: Routledge, 2004). For critiques of the Straussian underbelly of the Neocons see Anne Norton, *Leo Strauss and the Politics of American Empire* (Yale University Press, 2004), and for an accessible general history James Mann, *Rise of the Vulcans: The History of Bush's War Cabinet* (Viking Books, 2004).

⁹⁹ Typical examples of such shoddy fear based scholarship would include Amir Taheri, *Holy Terror* (Bethesda, 1987), Robin Wright, *In the Name of God* (New York, 1989), Johannes Jansen, *The Neglected Duty* (New York, 1986). However unfortunately after 9/11, which transformed the threat of Islam into a viable affect of security, a raft of the most crass forms of essentialist and Orientalist works have flooded a market that now demands to know and destroy its enemy. In contrast to some of these new Islamophobic works, Bernard Lewis looks quite sophisticated. See for instance David Frum and Richard Perle, *An End to Evil: How to Win the War on Terror* (Random House, 2003). or any book by the hack scholar Robert Spencer. For a much needed critique of this trend see Cole, *Engaging the Muslim World*..

¹⁰⁰ See Lawrence, *Shattering the Myth: Islam Beyond Violence*, and also Eickelman and Piscatori, *Muslim Politics*, and John L. Esposito and John O. Voll, *Islam and Democracy* (New York & Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1996). I depart significantly however from these accounts, which deploy a simplistic model of 'tradition' even when they claim it has historical variance. Lawrence treats Islamism as a form of anti-modernism, while in his widely read *Islam and Politics*, Esposito anchors his explanation of Islamist movements in a unitary understanding of Islam, a totality of shared practices and understandings. See John L. Esposito, *Islam and Politics*, 3rd ed., Contemporary Issues in the Middle East (Syracuse, NY: Syracuse

There is no doubt that 911 and the years since has seen a major shift of interest towards South Asian Islam. Prior to 911 the historiography of Muslim South Asia had tended to concentrate on the colonial and pre-colonial periods, and to this effect a number of important and pioneering studies on pre-partition Muslim political and educational institutions have been written.¹⁰² Until recently however political Islam in Pakistan had remained a relatively neglected affair although the largest, most well organized and influential party, the Jama‘at-i Islami (JI), had received attention from Seyyed Vali Reza Nasr.¹⁰³ Still however, with the exception of Zaman, and a number of short surveys,¹⁰⁴ no

University Press, 1991). His concept of an “Islamic imperative” is thus still naive and untenable. It is the facile distinction between modernity and tradition in these works, even if they are themselves pluralized, that is particularly problematic.

¹⁰¹ For a useful critique of the ‘revival’ master-narrative offered by Voll and Esposito — a critique that could easily be applied to Metcalf also — see Salwa Ismail, *Rethinking Islamist Politics: Culture, the State and Islamism* (London & New York: I.B. Tauris, 2003). In her persuasive analysis she shows how both scholars, though well intentioned in the struggle against overt Islamophobia, invariably ascribe some kind of trans-historical agency to Islam, ignoring in the process how everyday life and sociality are themselves formative of the ways in which belief is formulated to begin with. As Al-Azmeh notes “generalizations about social groups in terms of religion in order to describe their specificities and to underpin factors that overdetermine their socio-economic and ideological positions have become habitual, although they are irresponsible, for the forces that make for social involution are not religious.” al-Azmeh, *Islams and Modernities*, p. 3. Needless to say in this study I reject the priority and even viability of the very category of religion and tradition as it is constituted in secularist and liberal discourse.

¹⁰² Juan R. I. Cole, *Roots of North Indian Shi‘ism in Iran and Iraq: Religion and State in Awadh, 1722-1859*, vol. 6, Comparative Studies on Muslim Societies (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1988), David Gilmartin, *Empire and Islam: Punjab and the Making of Pakistan*, vol. 7, Comparative Studies on Muslim Societies (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1988), Sarah F. D. Ansari, *Sufi Saints and State Power: The Pirs of Sindh 1843-1947*, vol. 50, Cambridge South Asian Studies (Cambridge & New York: Cambridge University Press, 1992), Richard Maxwell Eaton, *The Rise of Islam and the Bengal Frontier, 1204-1760*, vol. 17, Comparative Studies on Muslim Societies (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1994), Carl W. Ernst, *Eternal Garden: Mysticism, History and Politics at a South Asian Sufi Center*, Suny Series in Muslim Spirituality in South Asia (Albany: State University of New York Press, 1992), David Lelyveld, *Aligarh's First Generation: Muslim Solidarity in British India*, Oxford India Paperbacks (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1978), Gail Minault, *The Khilafat Movement: Religious Symbolism and Political Mobilization in India*, vol. 16, Studies in Oriental Culture (New York: Columbia University Press, 1982), John F. Richards, *Mughal State and Society*, vol. 1 #1, The New Cambridge History of India; the Mughals & Their Contemporaries (New York: Cambridge University Press, 1995), Francis Robinson, *Separatism among Indian Muslims: The Politics of the United Provinces' Muslims, 1860-1923*, vol. 16, Cambridge South Asian Studies (London: Cambridge University Press, 1974).

¹⁰³ Seyyed Vali Reza Nasr, *The Vanguard of the Islamic Revolution: The Jama‘at-i Islami of Pakistan*, vol. 19, Comparative Studies on Muslim Societies (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1994), and ———, *Mawdudi and the Making of Islamic Revivalism* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1996). For an earlier account of the JI see Kalim Bahadur, *Jama‘at-i Islami of Pakistan* (Chetana Publications, 1977).

¹⁰⁴ See Nasr in Christopher Jaffrelot, *The Hindu Nationalist Movement in India* (New York: Columbia

major work on the JUI or the JUP¹⁰⁵ has been published to date, and this despite the fact that the JUI has consistently won more national and provincial assembly seats than the JI.¹⁰⁶ Prior to 911, the bulk of the analysis of Muslim politics had exclusively focused on Iran¹⁰⁷ and the Arab World (particularly Egypt).¹⁰⁸ This is not surprising given the events of the Iranian revolution (1979) and the assassination of Egyptian President Anwar Sadat (1981) by radical elements of the Muslim Brotherhood. By contrast the Islamist elements in Pakistan during this period were 'on our side'. With few exceptions, then little by way

University Press, 1996), Mariam Abou Zahab and Olivier Roy, *Islamist Networks: The Afghan-Pakistan Connection*, Ceri Series in Comparative Politics and International Studie (Columbia University Press, 2006), and Zaman on militant and sectarian violence. Older accounts that only briefly consider 'ulama politics include Ishtiaq Husain Qureshi, *'Ulama in Politics: A Study Relating to the Political Activities of the 'Ulama in the South-Asian Subcontinent from 1556 to 1947* (Karachi: Ma'aref, 1972), Aziz Ahmad, *Islamic Modernism in India and Pakistan: 1857-1964* (London: Oxford University Press, 1967), Leonard Binder, *Religion and Politics in Pakistan* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1961), and John L. Esposito, ed., *Voices of Resurgent Islam* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1983).

¹⁰⁵ The exceptions to this is are works by Pakistani scholars Sayyid A. S. Pirzada, *The Politics of the Jamiat Ulema-I Islam Pakistan, 1971-77* (Karachi: Oxford University Press, 2000), and Mujeeb Ahmad, *Jam'iyyat 'Ulama-I Pakistan: 1948-1979*, vol. 12, Historical Studies (Pakistan Series; No. 84 (Islamabad: National Institute of Historical and Cultural Research, 1993). Pirzada's account of the JUI has some useful information but is analytically and theoretically weak. Ahmed's work on the JUP has a particularly narrow focus; both offer a rather simple narrative account which provides very little insight or analysis and does not situate the history of the JUP/JUI within any larger framework or debate over Muslim politics, not to mention their overwhelmingly partisan and deferent tone.

¹⁰⁶ With the recent curtailment of Saudi funds flowing into the coffers of the JI, and the diversion of those funds to other Islamist parties, the JUI has emerged as significantly more powerful and influential party.

¹⁰⁷ See Said Amir Arjomand, *The Turban for the Crown: The Islamic Revolution in Iran*, Studies in Middle Eastern History (New York: Oxford University Press, 1988), Nikki R. Keddie, ed., *Scholars, Saints, and Sufis: Muslim Religious Institutions in the Middle East since 1500* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1978), ———, *Roots of Revolution: An Interpretive History of Modern Iran*, Yale Fastback Series (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1981), and Ervand Abrahamian, *Radical Islam: The Iranian Mojahedin*, Society and Culture in the Modern Middle East (London: I.B. Tauris, 1989).

¹⁰⁸ Sami Zubaida, *Islam, the People and the State: Essays on Political Ideas and Movements in the Middle East*, Revised ed. (London: I.B. Tauris & Co. Ltd., 1993), Richard P. Mitchell, *The Society of the Muslim Brothers* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1993), Gilles Kepel, *Muslim Extremism in Egypt: The Prophet and Pharaoh*, trans. Jon Rothschild (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1985), and Emmanuel Sivan, *Radical Islam: Medieval Theology and Modern Politics* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1990).. More recently see the excellent work of Saba Mahmood, *Politics of Piety: The Islamic Revival and the Feminist Subject* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2004), and Gregory Starrett, *Putting Islam to Work: Education, Politics, and Religious Transformation in Egypt*, vol. 25, Comparative Studies on Muslim Societies (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1998).. Earlier works that remained cuaght in the fundamentalist paradigm are Youssef Choueri, *Islamic Fundamentalism* (Continuum International Publishing Group, 2002), R. Hrair Dekmejian, *Islam in Revolution: Fundamentalism in the Arab World*, 2nd ed., Contemporary Issues in the Middle East (Syracuse, NY: Syracuse University Press, 1995). and 'Ali Hillal Desouki, *Islamic Resurgence in the Arab World* (New York, 1982).

of a more comprehensive analysis had existed for an understanding of Islamist politics in Pakistan.¹⁰⁹ In the wake of 9/11 however a proliferation of discourses on Pakistan¹¹⁰ and Afghanistan¹¹¹ has ensued, due in large part to the fact that this region has now come

¹⁰⁹ The exceptions to this as mentioned earlier are of course are of course Metcalf's pioneering work on the Deoband (Metcalf, *Islamic Revival in British India: Deoband, 1860-1900.*), and more recently Zaman, *The 'Ulama in Contemporary Islam: Custodians of Change*. However Metcalf has almost completely ignored the political activities of the Pakistani Deoband, preferring to focus on the "non-political" Tablighi Jamaat. Ayesha Jalal's though her earlier and important work on Jinnah (*Ayesha Jalal, The Sole Spokesman: Jinnah, the Muslim League, and the Demand for Pakistan*, vol. 31, *Cambridge South Asian Studies* (Cambridge & New York: Cambridge University Press, 1985).) and her recent ———, *Democracy and Authoritarianism in South Asia, Contemporary South Asia* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1995).), while offering insightful analysis of Pakistani politics, is weighed down by its Cambridge School emphasis on charismatic personas and elite politics, and does not focus on Islamic political parties per say. However her most recent work ———, *Partisans of Allah: Jihad in South Asia* (Harvard University Press, 2008). which I will discuss in the Chapter on Jihad, is more useful, though my approach here is a significant departure from her subjectivist account. Recent works by Lawrence Ziring and Ifthikar Malik also seem to treat these groups summarily. Among the few exceptions, see Ishtiaq Ahmed, *The Concept of an Islamic State: An Analysis of the Ideological Controversy in Pakistan* (London: Frances Pinter, 1987)., and more recently the excellent work of Nasr, *The Vanguard of the Islamic Revolution: The Jama'at-I Islami of Pakistan*. For pre 9/11 accounts, see Mumtaz Ahmed, "Islamic Fundamentalism in South Asia" in Martin E. Marty and Scott R. Appleby, eds., *Fundamentalisms Observed: A Study Conducted by the American Academy of Arts and Sciences*, The Fundamentalism Project (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1991). and Mumtaz Ahmed, "Parliament, Parties, Polls and Islam: Issues in the Current Debate on Religion and Politics in Pakistan", *American Journal of Islamic Social Sciences* 2, No. 1 (July 1985). Also see Hafeez Malik, "Islamic Political Parties and Mass Mobilization", *Islam and the Modern Age* 3, 2 (May 1972). Also studies of Islam and Politics in Pakistan after the Zia period have tended to focus on the issue of Islamization and its effects on public institutions and democracy, see especially William Richter, "The Political Meaning of Islamization in Pakistan" and Anita Weiss in Anita M. Weiss, ed., *Islamic Reassertion in Pakistan: The Application of Islamic Laws in a Modern State*, Contemporary Issues in the Middle East (Syracuse, NY: Syracuse University Press, 1986).

¹¹⁰ This has led to some excellent new work. See Farzana Shaikh, *Making Sense of Pakistan*, Columbia/Hurst (Columbia University Press, 2009), Alyssa Ayres, *Speaking Like a State: Language and Nationalism in Pakistan* (Cambridge University Press, 2009), Robert Rozehnal, *Islamic Sufism Unbound: Politics and Piety in Twenty-First Century Pakistan* (Palgrave Macmillan, 2007), Yasmin Khan, *The Great Partition: The Making of India and Pakistan* (Yale University Press, 2007), David Pinault, *Notes from the Fortune-Telling Parrot: Islam and the Struggle for Religious Pluralism in Pakistan*, Comparative Islamic Studies (Equinox Publishing, 2008), and Vazira Fazila-Yacoobali Zamindar, *The Long Partition and the Making of Modern South Asia: Refugees, Boundaries, Histories* (Columbia University Press, 2007). are representative of a new crop of scholarship on postcolonial Pakistan. I will consider the renewed interest in the Pakistan military in the next chapter.

¹¹¹ Between 1994 and 2001 Ahmed Rashid's book stood out as the most authoritative account (Ahmed Rashid, *Taliban: Islam, Oil and the Great Game in Central Asia* (London: I.B. Tauris & Co. Ltd., 2000).). Since then books on Afghanistan have exploded. Most of the work on Afghanistan however remains permeated by an interest in the Taliban. See for example Amin Tarzi Robert D. Crews, *The Taliban and the Crisis of Afghanistan* (Harvard University Press, 2009), William Maley, *The Afghanistan Wars*, Twentieth Century Wars (Palgrave Macmillan, 2009), Mark Sedra Geoffrey Hayes, *Afghanistan: Transition under Threat*, Studies in International Governance (Wilfrid Laurier University Press, 2008), David B. Edwards, *Before Taliban: Genealogies of the Afghan Jihad* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 2002), Larry P. Goodson, *Afghanistan's Endless War: State Failure, Regional Politics, and the Rise of the Taliban* (Seattle:

under the disciplinary gaze of an imperial regime. This renewed interest has led to some important new works on Islam and Pakistan. Traditional forms of Islamic education (madrasa) in particular have come under increased academic and state scrutiny¹¹². Our present is thus defined by a proliferation of discourse about individuals and about the truth of these individuals because these discourses are linked to the functioning of disciplinary power, normalization, and biopolitics.

Political Islam as a Disciplinary Object of Knowledge

A complete analysis of all these works is of course beyond the scope of this chapter. We can however identify a few primary trends which highlight the state of critical scholarship on political Islam today. In the early phase of the study of political Islam, the term “fundamentalism” was usually employed as a marker for the return of religion to the public sphere in the Muslim world, and it was contrasted with something called ‘modernity’¹¹³. The emergence of fundamentalism was initially seen as evidence of the failure of Islamic societies to properly modernize. Explanations for this ‘failure’ diverged widely, but the problematic was almost always framed between static binaries of Islam and the West as a reflection of the distinction between modernity and tradition. Since then the term fundamentalism, and its host of associated qualifiers — “Islamic revival”, “Islamic resurgence” — have been problematized to the degree that few serious

University of Washington Press, 2001), Peter Marsden, *The Taliban: War, Religion and the New Order in Afghanistan*, Politics in Contemporary Asia Series (Karachi: Oxford University Press, 1998).

¹¹² See for instance Hefner and Zaman, eds., *Schooling Islam: The Culture and Politics of Modern Education*, Malik, ed., *Madrasas in South Asia: Teaching Terror*, Ali Riaz, *Faithful Education: Madrasahs in South Asia* (Rutgers University Press, 2008), and the more policy oriented C. Christine Fair, *The Madrasah Challenge: Militancy and Religious Education in Pakistan*, Perspectives (United States Institute of Peace Press, 2008).

¹¹³ Michael Youssef, *Revolt against Modernity: Muslim Zealots and the West*, vol. 39, Social, Economic, and Political Studies of the Middle East (Leiden: E.J. Brill, 1985), W. Montgomery Watt, *Islamic Fundamentalism and Modernity* (London & New York: Routledge, 1988).

scholars use it as a precise analytical term.¹¹⁴ The 1990's were marked by a gradual disappearance of the term, which was replaced by a more nuanced approach to the various shades of "Muslim" politics. In its place the term "Islamist" and "political Islam" appeared.¹¹⁵ This new scholarship articulated the fundamentally modern nature of the new Islamist movements, and began situating these movements within the context of the material and political failures of postcolonial nation state. But even if the resort to a reified category of "Islam" as an explanatory category was fast becoming *de pass  *, sociological explanations tended to render Islamism as a response to 'conditions of modernity' and frustrated expectations.

As studies began to show the new Islamist actors were often products of modern, secular, educational institutions who were drawn to an Islamic idiom and worldview in part as a result of the manifest failures of postcolonial nation states to either bring adequate levels of development or extricate themselves from ongoing neocolonial relationships. Two broad categories of Muslim politics began to be distinguished; Islamists, who were more clearly identified with political Islam and Muslim modernists. Hence in Pakistan the Muslim League, the movement of Muslim nationalism that led to the creation of Pakistan was generally not categorized as a form of political Islam, in contrast to the movement spearheaded by Abu'l-A'la Mawdudi (1903–1979). Hence as

¹¹⁴ The imprecise nature of this term is highlighted by the failed attempt to give the term any series of consistent meanings. See Marty and Appleby, eds., *Fundamentalisms Observed: A Study Conducted by the American Academy of Arts and Sciences*. In Bobby Sayyid's critical reading of the discourses of Western modernity on Islam, he shows how the very term is compromised by its unexamined eurocentrism. The need for the category of fundamentalism reflects an anxiety about the identity of western modernity itself and the need for a constitutive other. See Bobby S. Sayyid, *A Fundamental Fear: Eurocentrism and the Emergence of Islamism*, Postcolonial Encounters Series (London: Zed Books, 1997). For Sayyid, Islamism's anti-modernity is a rejection of the hegemony of western epistemology and the political hierarchies that are premised on it.

¹¹⁵ Eickelman and Piscatori, *Muslim Politics*, Joel Beinin and Joe Stork, eds., *Political Islam: Essays from Middle East Report*, Merip Reader (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1997).

historian of religion Bruce Lawrence argued, “fundamentalists” could not have appeared in any but the modern age.¹¹⁶ Political theorist Roxanne Euben makes a similar observation; because “fundamentalism is in large measure determined by a modern context, it makes little sense to understand it as “premodern” in either a chronological or a substantive sense”¹¹⁷ Instead Euben suggests that we view fundamentalism as itself a foundationalist *variation* of the postmodern critique of modernity.¹¹⁸

Islamism/fundamentalism had to be seen therefore as a modern phenomenon shot through with modernist attitudes and assumptions about the world. In principle the Islamist is not opposed to aspects of modernity (the modern state, political parties, industry, technology, etc), but instead the Islamist seeks to put her own cultural/identity stamp on the form of the modern. A naïve distinction thus emerges between content and form, between science and culture, religion and politics. In the world view of the Islamist, Western culture

¹¹⁶ Lawrence, *Shattering the Myth: Islam Beyond Violence*. Political theorist Roxanne Euben makes a similar observation when she writes that because “fundamentalism is in large measure determined by a modern context, it makes little sense to understand it as “premodern” in either a chronological or a substantive sense”: Roxanne L. Euben, *Enemy in the Mirror: Islamic Fundamentalism and the Limits of Modern Rationalism* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1999). See also John Gray, *Al Qaeda and What It Means to Be Modern* (New York & London: The New Press, 2003). Instead Euben suggests that we view fundamentalism as itself a variation of the postmodern critique of modernity. This brings her position close to Akbar Ahmed who writes that “fundamentalism is the attempt to resolve how to live in a world of radical doubt.” Akbar S. Ahmed, *Postmodernism and Islam: Predicament and Promise* (New York & London: Routledge, 1992), p.13.

¹¹⁷ Euben, *Enemy in the Mirror: Islamic Fundamentalism and the Limits of Modern Rationalism*, p. 163. See also Gray, *Al Qaeda and What It Means to Be Modern*. Zaman also writes that “modernism and Islamism—have both been largely rooted in modern, Westernized institutions of education.” (p. 7). However when he goes on to distinguish traditionalist ‘ulama from this group, he seems to be committing the same fallacy that sharply divides the religious from the political sphere.

¹¹⁸ This at first blush seems to bring her position close to that of Akbar S. Ahmed’s who writes that “fundamentalism is the attempt to resolve how to live in a world of radical doubt.” Ahmed, *Postmodernism and Islam: Predicament and Promise*, p.13. However unlike Ahmed’s rather naïve take on postmodernity, Euben recognizes that a core element of postmodernism is the philosophical rejection of foundations. Postmodernism is anti-foundationalist, Islamism by contrast is not. As Bassam Tibi rightly argues, “The fundamentalist yearning for the absolute introduces a concept of absolutism in human knowledge, definitely not a postmodern idea” Bassam Tibi, *Islam between Culture and Politics* (New York: Palgrave, 2001). Tibi, like Lawrence, embraces a variation of the “incommensurability” thesis. Euben’s strategy, the correct one in my view, is to problematize the very singular conception of modernity and the West. Furthermore she argues “like postmodernism, fundamentalists’ paradoxical relationship to modernity represents an attempt to move beyond modernity in a way that is simultaneously parasitic upon it.” (p. 166)

(content) can be separated from its technological form.¹¹⁹ In short Islamists were shown to be modern because their intellectual positions were often formulated in terms heavily indebted to the discourses of the modern age. Islamists therefore were not expressions of a return of Islamic medievalism, but something new, something alternatively modern.

However while Said's idea of resistance is certainly not ethnocentric or xenophobic, one unfortunate aspect of anti-imperialist sentiment in post-colonial cultures is the tendency to blame everything on a monological 'West'. A typical 'nativist' response has been to resort to reactionary endorsements of native 'tradition' tout court, now matter how anachronistic or objectionable these may be. Said's *Orientalism* may itself have been part of this problem. Because *Orientalism* showed how the 'Orient' was constructed and thus systematically misrepresented in a variety of academic disciplines, it was often quoted and used as a bulwark in the cultural dimension of anti-colonial sentiment. However the book completely ignored the various forms of oppression that actually exist in the formerly colonized world, and did not equally problematize the hermeneutic and power dimensions of the 'Orient's' self-representation of itself. As with any stage of cultural formation, the dominant discursive mode that successfully stifles its rival claims, has its own political and often arbitrary and contingent conditions of emergence. Despite the fact that it would be an unjustifiable extrapolation, one could get the impression, reading *Orientalism*, that any kind of oppression and despotism attributed to 'oriental' cultures was an illusion, maliciously concocted by the West in its imperial interests.¹²⁰

¹¹⁹ In *Islam awr Jiddat Passandi* (Islam and Modernism) the Deobandi cleric Taqi 'Usmani holds a similar dichotomous view of the modern.

¹²⁰ Thus in *Culture and Imperialism* Said seems to be sharply aware of this earlier lacunae and thus makes his contempt for reactionary and xenophobic nationalisms quite clear. But the grounds of this contempt

However while all of these new studies formed significant advances over the essentialist caricatures of an earlier Orientalist generation, they were still hampered by a one sided consideration of the power/knowledge nexus; locked within the paradigm of ‘representation.’ That is to say most post-Orientalist scholars became fixated on the politics of knowledge and representation *in* the West. If knowledge about Islam was inked to the west’s own discursive and imperial hegemony, what about Muslim knowledge about Islam? How do power relations between Muslim subjects effect the production of Muslim subjectivity *within* Muslim societies? This means that the question of Islam had to incorporate and go beyond the series of largely straw man arguments that the critique of Orientalism nonetheless had to demolish. But because it is no longer sufficient to show how “Islams” are multiple, diverse, heterogeneous, modern, capable of adaptation and change, etc. one must go beyond Orientalism and postcolonialism more generally.¹²¹ If Islam is an empty signifier then the analysis of Muslim life must be situated within a broader set of economic, political and power relations on the one hand, and the specificity of embodied life on the other.¹²² It follows that notions of culture

only more clearly expose his deep commitment to liberal humanism. Liberal ideology has succeed precisely in masking its own operations as ‘common sense’; i.e. it does not conceive of itself as an ideology.

¹²¹ Such calls for “regime change” within postcolonial studies have come to be sounded with more regularity. See for instance Gayatri Chakravorty Spivak, *A Critique of Postcolonial Reason: Toward a History of the Vanishing Present* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1999), and Revathi Krishnaswamy and John C. Hawley, eds., *The Postcolonial and the Global* (University of Minnesota Press, 2007). In a similar vein historian Geoff Eley critiques the totalizing assumptions of certain trajectories of postcolonialism. In their attempts at ‘provincializing Europe’, writes Eley, “post-Saidian historians sometimes imply an over abstracted and homogenized conception of the West and its internal histories.” Geoff Eley, *A Crooked Line: From Cultural History to the History of Society* (University of Michigan Press, 2005), p. 194. Eley goes on to conclude that “the division between “social” and “cultural” was always a false categorical separation. ... That’s why we need new “histories of society.” ... the relevance of historical studies for the future will certainly require renewing an insurgent spirit again” (Eley, p. 203). I see the metacolonial as an attempt to answer the call of an insurgent spirit.

¹²² Euben and Sami Zubaida’s work are good example of this new breed of nuanced critical historical political analysis. Rejecting culturalist approaches and the general unqualified use of “Islam” as an analytical category, Zubaida problematizes therefore the idea of Islam as a coherent sociological and

(piety, *adab*) and religious symbols should not be treated as sociological or political constants. Contemporary Islamist movements then, including ‘traditionalist’ ones, like other political developments, are not necessarily the expression of continuity or persistent themes of Islamic history. Political discourse, Islamic or otherwise, is thus shaped by political forces and the socio-economic and political contexts in which they are articulated. Additionally critical perspectives should take into account the possibility of serious epistemic ruptures¹²³ of ‘tradition’.

In many ways Euben’s argument is also indicative of the critical discourse trend. For instance she seems on the one hand to object to the use of an anti-foundationalist methodology (broadly speaking post-structural and hermeneutic) to frame a sympathetic account of political institutions which not only presume a thickly metaphysical conception of ethics and community, but in fact claim that notions of the good are grounded in specific historical texts (Qur’an, hadith). At the same time she recognizes that these claims are themselves pressed into the service of both ethical and political objectives. And so while my own work clearly reaffirms the now commonly accepted view that there is no essential or monolithic Islam, it leaves room for the understanding of how particular subjectivities come into concreteness, and how scholarship must attempt to understand the truth value of alternative political cultures rather than dismiss them as merely epiphenomenal. It is by keeping such tensions open, rather than attempting a definitive closure, that one’s description and understanding of political Islam can be enriched.

political entity. See Zubaida, *Islam, the People and the State: Essays on Political Ideas and Movements in the Middle East*.

¹²³ I elaborate on this below in the sections on genealogy.

With some measure of generalization then we can say that scholarship on political Islam has gone through several broad yet continually overlapping critical phases; the critique of Orientalism and Western representations (Said) — the critique of static homogenous essentialisms, and the recognition of multiplicity and the historicity of Muslim politics — the linguistic turn which offered a critique/refinement of the static, allegedly Eurocentric¹²⁴ categories that are deployed to study social and political formations more broadly (religion¹²⁵, secularism/modernity¹²⁶, tradition, ethnicity¹²⁷ etc) — and then finally the most recent phase which deploys a more sophisticated framework for understanding the relationships between language, history, subjectivity and power (discourse)¹²⁸. In some ways then, with varying degrees of sophistication, all these critiques are premised on an understanding of the relationship between power, language and subjectivity. Clearly then for this study the problematic of political Islam is to be placed within the broad framework of a critique of discourse rather than ideology; Foucault rather than Marx.

Discourse and Power: Tradition and Genealogy

¹²⁴ Ella Shohat and Robert Stam, *Unthinking Eurocentrism: Multiculturalism and the Media*, Sightlines (Routledge, 1994), Dipesh Chakrabarty, *Provincializing Europe: Postcolonial Thought and Historical Difference*, ed. Geoff Eley and Sherry Ortner Nicholas Dirks, Princeton Studies in Culture/Power/History (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2000).

¹²⁵ See the excellent work of Tomoko Masuzawa, *The Invention of World Religions: Or, How European Universalism Was Preserved in the Language of Pluralism* (University Of Chicago Press, 2005). And of course the seminal Asad, *Genealogies of Religion: Discipline and Reasons of Power in Christianity and Islam*. In this influential text Asad relentlessly troubles the idea that “religion” is a transparent category of universal history.

¹²⁶ Talal Asad, *Formations of the Secular: Christianity, Islam, Modernity*, Cultural Memory in the Present (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 2003).

¹²⁷ Gyanendra Pandey, *The Construction of Communalism in Colonial North India* (Delhi & New York: Oxford University Press, 1990).

¹²⁸ Exemplary in this regard would be Mitchell, who draws on Derrida and Foucault to account for the ‘enframing practices of colonial knowledge. See Timothy Mitchell, *Colonising Egypt*, Cambridge Middle East Library (Cambridge & New York: Cambridge University Press, 1988).

This brings us finally to a brief consideration of a thinker/scholar who self-consciously situates his ‘anthropology of the modern’¹²⁹ within the framework of Foucault’s paradigm of genealogy; Talal Asad. Extending Foucault’s critique of the disciplines, Asad interrogates the conceptual frameworks that govern Western knowledge practices; especially those within the anthropology of religion. In particular he problematizes a series of unthought assumptions that undergird the normative framework of anthropological and scholarly inquiry into the reasons of non-European traditions, principally Islam. Like Foucault, his inquiries are intended to be read as “effective histories”¹³⁰ or histories of the present, rather than social and cultural histories. That is to say he is not interested in deploying a colonial gaze which seeks to objectively track the development of an *ethnos* and a *chronos* of the other. And like Foucault he is not concerned with the search for “origins” that often characteristic of traditional social history.¹³¹ Additionally Asad offers a genealogical critique of the category of “agency.” Various conceptions of an autonomous sovereign self — the agents who ‘make its own history’ — lie at the core of the discourse of secular humanism.

However as is well known Asad also borrows the concept of ‘tradition’ from the work of the Catholic philosopher Alasdair MacIntyre.¹³² Talal Asad subsequently coins the term “discursive tradition” — which effectively represents a tensional combination

¹²⁹ For a series of critical engagements with Asad’s work see Charles Hirschkind and David Scott, eds., *Powers of the Secular Modern: Talal Asad and His Interlocutors*, 1 ed., Cultural Memory in the Present (Stanford University Press, 2006).

¹³⁰ “Effective” history differs from the history of historians in being without constants. Nothing in man—not even his body—is sufficiently stable to serve as the basis for self-recognition or for understanding other men.” Foucault, “Nietzsche, Genealogy, History.”

¹³¹ See in particular David Scott, “The Tragic Sensibility of Talal Asad,” in *Powers of the Secular Modern: Talal Asad and His Interlocutors*, ed. Charles Hirschkind and David Scott, *Cultural Memory in the Present* (Stanford University Press, 2006).

¹³² Alasdair MacIntyre, *After Virtue: A Study in Moral Theory*, 2nd ed. (Notre Dame, IN: University of Notre Dame Press, 1984).

between Foucault's concept of the "discursive regime" and McIntyre's 'tradition'. Asad suggest that Islam be viewed as a discursive tradition, and without doubt this trajectory has been generating some of the most exciting scholarship on Muslim politics and society in recent years.¹³³ I will suggest however that this Asadian framework remains caught between two levels of Foucaultian critique; between epistemology-power (*connaissance*) and a more radical understanding of Foucault's work at the level of ontology-power (*savoir*). What this means is that with Asad, Foucault's critique of power/knowledge remains at the level of epistemology (*connaissance*). Foucault's distinction between two types of knowledge, *connaissance/savoir*, is as I shall elaborate below, key to a complete understanding of genealogy. Foucault's History of Sexuality was subtitled *la volonté de savoir* (the will to knowledge) as an obvious homage to Nietzsche's "Will to Power."

In *Towards an Anthropology of Islam*, Asad writes:

A tradition consists essentially of discourses that seek to instruct practitioners regarding the correct form and purpose of a given practice that, precisely because it is established, has a history. These discourses relate conceptually to a past ... An Islamic discursive tradition is simply a tradition of Muslim discourse that addresses itself to conceptions of the Islamic past and future, with reference to a particular Islamic practice in the present.

Discursive tradition's therefore are constituted and reconstituted not only by history, but also by the relations of power that saturate the spaces of the past and present. Muslim discourses, like western discourses, and the actors who articulate them are thus

¹³³ Haj, *Reconfiguring Islamic Tradition: Reform, Rationality, and Modernity*, Charles Hirschkind, *The Ethical Soundscape: Cassette Sermons and Islamic Counterpublics*, Cultures of History (Columbia University Press, 2006), Mahmood, *Politics of Piety: The Islamic Revival and the Feminist Subject*.. See also Talal Asad, *On Suicide Bombing*, Wellek Library Lectures (Columbia University Press, 2007).. To some degree both Zaman and Ismail are also influenced by Asad (See Ismail, *Rethinking Islamist Politics: Culture, the State and Islamism*, Zaman, *The 'Ulama in Contemporary Islam: Custodians of Change*.) Zaman deploys this term in his analysis of the Deoband 'ulama, but the weight of *tradition* displaces the analytic potential of power.

situated both historically and in a field of power relationships. As Zaman correctly notes this view of Islam, as discursively produced in the currents of history/power, “avoid essentialist constructions that strive to judge all facets of Islamic thought, ideals, and practice in terms of how they relate to (or, more often than not, fail to relate to) Islam’s foundational texts.” Unlike how they appear in many otherwise methodologically sensitive writings, “traditions” are not pure *a priori* isolable elements that interact with a given historical context, but are rather produced from within the field of power relationships. Thus orthodoxy is itself, however far removed from the formal arena of the political — the state — is itself an assertion of a series of power claims. Thus ‘ulama authority, and the practices that seek to constitute that authority within a populace, is simultaneously a relationships of power. In short culture/religion cannot not be treated either as a sociological given, nor cannot it be seen outside of the sphere of the political. This is in part what Asad means by the fundamental historicity of Islam. Naturally such a claim would be an anathema to the ‘ulama who base their authority and power on the basis of possessing originary and authentic knowledge (‘*ilm*). And this is precisely why Roy’s thesis on the failure of political Islam,¹³⁴ is itself a monumental failure.¹³⁵

Effectively then and in ways complementary to Agamben as we shall see, Asad seeks to demystifying contemporary secular political institutions, by showing how myth and violence lurk behind their claims of worldly reason and tolerance. Once its rational-legal mask is removed, the modern state will reveal itself to be far from rational or

¹³⁴ Roy, *The Failure of Political Islam*.

¹³⁵ This is also why Eickelman and Piscatori’s use of the term “Muslim politics” to characterize actors that deploy “signs and symbols derived from Islamic traditions” in the political sphere, is also deeply flawed. Without a more robust conception of the political, and without fully recognizing the historicity, rather than the mere variance of tradition, such characterizations remain as arbitrary as the term fundamentalism that they seek to displace. See Eickelman and Piscatori, *Muslim Politics*.

secular.¹³⁶ But would Asad say the same about institutions which operate in the name of Islam? On the surface it seems as if his final recourse to the category of tradition is designed to salvage the possibility of an ethical tradition in opposition to the purely political traditions of the West.

But more importantly we are no longer concerned with the question “what is Islam”, “how is it represented and constructed”, but rather how are discourses of Islam deployed in the socio-political arena by multiple actors, both “Muslim” and “non-Muslim”. The discursive deployment and construction of Islam as a disciplinary political (knowledge) object of western inquiry — an object to be known, controlled, reformed and harnessed — is not then the exclusive preserve of a colonial or imperial imaginary, but rather a feature of a more dense and overlapping series of governmentalities. If Asad is concerned primarily with how modern western knowledge practices, in particular anthropology, forge Islam/religion as a disciplinary object, then here in this work I seek to extend this question to the ways in which Muslim subjects are both forged by and simultaneously deploy their own forms of knowledge/power

It has thus become important to heed the methodologically sensitive calls for thinking about Islam and Muslim society in full view of its own historicity. In addition to thinking about the specificity and diversity of Islamic societies, my analysis will consciously divest itself from the usage of the over determining factor of “religion/Islam” or “ethnicity” as a central category for explanation.¹³⁷ The limits of deploying “Islam” as

¹³⁶ Asad, *Formations of the Secular: Christianity, Islam, Modernity*, p. 23.

¹³⁷ See the introduction by Juan R. I. Cole, in Juan R. I. Cole, ed., *Comparing Muslim Society: Knowledge and the State in a World Civilization*, Comparative Studies in Society & History (Ann Arbor: University of Michigan Press, 1992).

a central category for understanding Pakistani politics come into particularly sharp focus when we consider the recent sudden shift in student politics in Karachi. Prior to the rise of the MQM (Muhajir National Movement) both the JUI and the JI found a strong base of support within the Muhajir community. But this identification with “Islamic” politics, underwent an overnight shift as the MQM rose to political dominance by the mid 1980’s. Such sudden shifts point to the strong need to analyze Pakistani politics in terms that do not distinctly privilege primordial categories such as “Islam” or even “ethnicity.” The over determination of “ethnicity” or “Islam” as causative elements in the political arena, tends to mask several factors which are more significant; namely the repressive role of the state; its legitimization of the use of violence as the means for political participation and negotiation; and in particular, the role of the military, which from the very outset of the nations history, has attempted to control the political process and gear the state towards maintaining a political economy of defense.¹³⁸

More generally I might add, I would like to ask questions related to the uses and deployment of postmodern strategies for thinking and writing the Other (Muslims). For instance has deconstruction allowed Islam, long victimized, silenced and excluded by the prevailing hierarchies embedded in the text called ‘the history of the West’, to assert itself more forcefully on the worlds stage? Is terrorism a species of this assertion? Can deconstructive readings, which developed out of and in reaction to a set of historically specific (Western) discursive practices, in which subjectivity and the egological model of an autonomous rational consciousness take primacy, be applied unproblematically to a genre which emerged out of a different set of ideological and historical precedents.

¹³⁸ See Ayesha Jalal, *The State of Martial Rule: The Origins of Pakistan's Political Economy of Defence*, vol. 46, Cambridge South Asian Studies (Cambridge & New York: Cambridge University Press, 1990).

Furthermore doesn't employing deconstruction as a set of universal techniques and extending it unproblematically into a non-Western context, run the risk of making these practices yet another metanarrative with the 'West' as its originating point. While such queries are critical, I do think that with the requisite sensitivities to the historical specificities of Islamic societies, genealogical/deconstructive critiques may indeed be usefully applied to other knowledge disciplines — *kalam* and *shari'a* (Islamic theology and jurisprudence) — which have taken on many of the original onto-theological errors that Heidegger reserves for 'Western' thought.¹³⁹ Furthermore the very civilizational disjuncture between the West (Hellenism, Judaism, Christianity) and Islam, has itself been exposed as an Orientalist binarism.¹⁴⁰ Similarly a Foucauldian critique aimed at revealing reasons 'will to truth' as inextricable from desire and power (i.e. Orientalism), may equally be used to uncover the ways in which appeals to revelation serve as the vehicle of suppression in the hands of those who control, dominate and disseminate discourse (i.e. Islamism, the 'ulama).

Foucault's Genealogy

The purpose of history, guided by genealogy, is not to discover the roots of our identity, but to commit itself to its dissipation. ... It is no longer a question of judging the past in the name of a truth that only we can possess in the present, but of risking the destruction of the subject who seeks knowledge [*connaissance*] in the endless deployment of the will to knowledge [*savoir*].¹⁴¹

¹³⁹ This seemingly Eurocentric assertion must however be viewed in light of Heidegger's non-geographical understanding of Europe. For an excellent reading see Rodolphe Gasché, *Europe, or the Infinite Task : A Study of a Philosophical Concept*, Meridian, Crossing Aesthetics (Stanford, Calif.: Stanford University Press, 2009).

¹⁴⁰ Richard W. Bulliet, *The Case for Islamo-Christian Civilization* (Columbia University Press, 2004). Although the question of who produces and who consumes a cruise missile is not so ambiguous.

¹⁴¹ Foucault, "Nietzsche, Genealogy, History," p. 367.

I have tried to get out from the philosophy of the subject through a genealogy of this subject, by studying the constitution of the subject across history which has led us up to the modern concept of the self. This has not always been an easy task, since most historians prefer a history of social processes (where society plays the role of the subject) and most philosophers prefer a subject without history¹⁴².

Foucault remains one of the most widely cited figures in the human and social sciences, and this despite his rigorous critique of the sciences of man and their disciplinary regimes of truth. This past decade however has been marked by a significant revival and rethinking of Foucault's legacy¹⁴³. Part of this has been stimulated by the recent spate of publications in English of Foucault's year long seminars at the Collège de France.¹⁴⁴ In addition the huge reception within the wider humanities and social sciences of Agamben's work on sovereign power and the exception — so painfully relevant in a post 9/11 world — has also rekindled an interest in Foucaultian biopolitics; which had for the most part during the 1990's been subsumed under a more limited concern with the governmentality of advanced neoliberal regimes.¹⁴⁵ Foucault's seminars, especially *The Birth of Biopolitics*, within which the famous governmentality lectures were situated, has led to a revaluation of the relationship between Foucault's complex grammars of power.¹⁴⁶ The continued and increasing relevance of Foucault's work can be seen, in part,

¹⁴² Michel Foucault, *Aesthetics, Method, and Epistemology*, ed. Paul Rabinow, vol. II, Essential Works of Foucault, 1954-1984 (New Press, 1999).

¹⁴³ C. G. Prado, ed., *Foucault's Legacy*, Continuum Studies in Continental Philosophy (Continuum, 2009), and Jorge Capetillo Sam Binkley, ed., *A Foucault for the 21st Century: Governmentality, Biopolitics and Discipline in the New Millennium* (Cambridge Scholars Publishing, 2009), are two recent examples from a plethora of new work.

¹⁴⁴ Foucault, *Society Must Be Defended*, ———, *Security, Territory, Population*, Michel Foucault, *The Birth of Biopolitics*, Michel Foucault: Lectures at the College De France (Palgrave Macmillan, 2008), ———, *Psychiatric Power: Lectures at the Collège De France, 1973--1974*, Lectures at the Collège De France (Picador, 2008), having produced the most excitement.

¹⁴⁵ Gordon, Burchell, and Miller, eds., *The Foucault Effect: Studies in Governmentality*.

¹⁴⁶ Thomas Lemke, "Biopolitics and Beyond. On the Reception of a Vital Foucauldian Notion," (2005), ———, "'the Birth of Bio-Politics': Michel Foucault's Lecture at the Collège De France on Neo-Liberal Governmentality," *Economy and Society* 30, no. 2 (2001).

by the vitality of the journal *Foucault Studies* which was founded in 2004, and the formation in 2008 of the new *Journal of Power*, largely inspired by Foucault's work¹⁴⁷ In addition to this many interdisciplinary journals continue to issue special editions devoted to an analysis of Foucault's paradigmatic work.¹⁴⁸ As Sam Binkley and Jorge Capetillo note in their recent re-evaluation of Foucault:

... to imagine that the question of the contemporary relevance of Foucault is exhausted by changing empirical conditions alone is to reduce Foucault to precisely the *kind of historicism he rejected*, and to ignore the animating principle driving his work... Foucault can never be *passé*, if for no other reason than his assertions were never meant to project distinct teleologies or designate historical periodizations. While at times he may have gestured toward "great ages" (the classical age, the modern age, the age of sovereignty or discipline), what was central to his analysis was not the unfolding sequence of distinct world-historical stages, but the overlapping constellations of forms and technologies through which societies constitute themselves through the production of distinct subjects. Foucault's oft cited assertion of the triangulation of the power formations associated with sovereignty, discipline and biopower affirms the distance he placed between his own approach and that of those who traffic in tidy, sequenced "ages."¹⁴⁹

Hence it should be clear that that something called "the age of sovereignty" did not simply gave way to the age of discipline which would later gave way to the age of biopower and governmentality. This point is critical because it allows us to consider and formulate more complex assemblages (*dispositifs*) of power which are often a mixture of power's various modalities. It is in this way that my work begins to make sense of the exercise of 'ulama power in terms of both sovereignty, biopolitics, discipline and

¹⁴⁷ See Haugaard, Mark and Malesevic, Sinisa (2008) 'The ubiquity of power', *Journal of Power*, 1: 1, 1-3

¹⁴⁸ See *Theory, Culture & Society 2009*, Couze Venn and Tiziana Terranova, "Introduction: Thinking after Michel Foucault," *Theory, Culture & Society* (2009), D. Wood, "Editorial: Foucault and Panopticism Revisited," *Surveillance and Society* 1, no. 3 (2003). Also Kiersey, Nicholas J. and Weidner, Jason R. (2009) 'Editorial Introduction', *Global Society*, 23: 4, 353 — 361, and *Journal of the Philosophy of History*, Pli 13, 2006.

¹⁴⁹ Sam Binkley, ed., *A Foucault for the 21st Century: Governmentality, Biopolitics and Discipline in the New Millennium*, p. 4, emphasis mine.

governmentality.¹⁵⁰ In Nealon's recent work, the only *telos* that one can derive from Foucault's work is the idea of the intensification of power relationships over time¹⁵¹ In light of Foucault power oeuvre then our task as critical historians/anthropologists is to problematize the interpenetration of power, knowledge, and subjectivity

History of the Present

If the historian 'throws' himself directly into the 'world-view' of an era, he has not thus proved as yet that he understands his object in an authentically historical way, and not just 'aesthetically.'¹⁵²

Foucault's radical approach to thinking and writing history is generally subsumed under the title of genealogy. Historians influenced by Foucault, generally refer to their work as histories of the present. However the contours and meanings of Foucault's radical historicism are not often elaborated upon by those who invoke the terms.¹⁵³ Foucault's histories on the one hand appear to present us with a linear narrative about what happened; a narrative leading from the past up to the present. According to this reading Foucault's work aims at "objective historical truth". But, as McGushin suggests, it is also necessary to understand Foucault's historicism as a creative endeavor, as an "etho-poetic work." An etho-poetic approach does not simply aim to "achieve objective

¹⁵⁰ Dean suggests that such mixtures of power can result in particularly demonic formations. See Dr Mitchell M Dean, *Governmentality: Power and Rule in Modern Society* (Sage Publications Ltd, 2009).

¹⁵¹ See Jeffrey T. Nealon, *Foucault Beyond Foucault: Power and Its Intensifications since 1984* (Stanford University Press, 2007).. For another critique of the "epochalist" reading of Foucault see also Mariana Valverde, "Genealogies of European States: Foucauldian Reflections," *Economy and Society* 36, no. 1 (2007).

¹⁵² Martin Heidegger, *Being and Time*, trans. Macquarrie and Robinson (New York: HarperCollins, HarperSanFrancisco, 1962). p. 488.

¹⁵³ This is the point of departure of two superb studies of Foucault. See Han, *Foucault's Critical Project: Between the Transcendental and the Historical*, and Edward F. McGushin, *Foucault's Askesis: An Introduction to the Philosophical Life*, Topics in Historical Philosophy (Northwestern University Press, 2007).

historical truth and thereby produce knowledge. The ultimate purpose is to transform the subject engaged in historical or philosophical thinking.”¹⁵⁴ Thus part of Foucault’s final project was to problematize our very conception of philosophical and historical truth.

Thus before I attempt to clarify the relationships between the various resonance of Foucault’s grammars of power, it will be important to establish the *sense* of Foucault’s histories, since this work follows in the wake of his critique of historicism. How do we reconcile Foucault as a historian — one of the most influential thinkers of the social science and one who has had a particularly profound impact on the discipline of history — when he also simultaneously and consciously thought of his work as ficto-histories? As Agamben also states Foucault’s “historical investigations were only the shadow of his theoretical questioning of the present.”¹⁵⁵ These remarks are not simply his recognition of the interpretive or narrative structure of all historical work,¹⁵⁶ but instead signal a more complex relationship between his understanding of history and temporality. While Foucault’s own historiographical shifts — from archaeology to genealogy to problematization — are complex and interwoven¹⁵⁷ from a preliminary perspective it is important to distinguish between two senses of history, *Geschichte* and the more conventional *Historie*. Most historians are historians of the latter. Foucault’s genius, influenced in large part by Heidegger’s understanding of historicity¹⁵⁸ was to combine

¹⁵⁴ McGushin, *Foucault's Askesis: An Introduction to the Philosophical Life*.

¹⁵⁵ See Agamben, lecture *Power and Glory*, 2008.

¹⁵⁶ Hayden White, *Metahistory: The Historical Imagination in Nineteenth-Century Europe* (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 1973), and Keith Jenkins, *Re-Thinking History*, Routledge Classics (London & New York: Routledge, 2003).

¹⁵⁷ C. Koopman, "Revising Foucault: The History and Critique of Modernity."

¹⁵⁸ In Heidegger’s famous elaboration on history in section §8 of *Being and Time*, “Historicity” refers to that existential awareness, or experience through which one understands Being in history, and as such it is the ultimate ground and cause of historical awareness and historical research. For Heidegger, the existential view of having a fate or a destiny, along with the power of a story to reveal meaning, is what makes human history possible. Hence the time of the event, *kairòs*, should be distinguished from the domain of ordinary

his inquiries into both forms of history, a fact that has lead to no considerable profusion of incoherencies, since his two categories of knowledge, *savoir* and *connaissance*, can also be linked to this distinction.¹⁵⁹ Thus instead of the conventional understanding of history as the account of what has happened (*Historie*), *Geschichte* is thinking in response to the historical itself, the dynamic unfolding (event) through which ‘history’ itself happens. We are accustomed to thinking of history (*Geschichte*) as what happens or takes place in time (*Historie*), and this taking place we understand in terms of the unfolding of events that are historically (*historic*) observable. Thus a distinction between history and what we call historicity is key to understanding genealogy. In Foucault’s “history of the present”, we must hear the echoes of this evental history as it crosses over and shapes the present. *Geschichte* then should always be interpreted not merely as history in the narrow sense, the always selective and limited chronicle of past events, the kind we usually find in “history” textbooks, but rather as referring both to historicity and the reigning mentality through events in time are fictioned (fashioned) into a story. Thus as Paul Bove notes, “Foucault is interested in history as *Geschichte*”¹⁶⁰ History does not fashion itself, nor do raw events as such exist outside a framework of already available interpretations. Simultaneously historicity is not itself something historical¹⁶¹ Chronology, and the *Historie* that articulates it, is thus only the visible (present-to-hand) element of a more primordial historicity that, whilst always operative, nonetheless

history (*chronos*) which is the successive, demonstrative time of facts, for which Heidegger reserves the word *Historie*. See also Charles R. Bambach, *Heidegger, Dilthey, and the Crisis of Historicism* (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 1995).

¹⁵⁹ Another way of framing this is to think of the difference between chronological time and *kairòlogical* time.

¹⁶⁰ See Bove for Foucauldian critique of historicism and new historicism: Paul A. Bove, *In the Wake of Theory* (Middletown, CT: Wesleyan University Press ; University Press of New England, 1992), p.21.

¹⁶¹ Note the resemblances of this distinction with Heidegger’s definition of technology (*technē*) as something that is not itself technological.

remains in excess of its actualization. Thus, the event is never fully realized or exhausted in the worldly events that unfold in the present tense. Thus there is a distinction in Foucault between historicity of the event versus history constructed as a story or a narrative. As Ziarek notes this all too easily ignored distinction between *Geschichte* and *Historie*, “holds the key to the problem of otherness and difference, and its inscriptions in the space of history.”¹⁶²

Foucault wasn’t simply offering a method, a way to do history, but also a way to think the meaning of the historical, the past and the present. Foucault offers us a radical redirection of our gaze, from the narrative element (the always selective and interpretively bound reconfiguration of the archive) towards what he called the historical *a priori*. A failure to confront what Foucault means by these terms is a refusal to think Foucault’s radical insights into history as a play of power rather than as the narrative expression and reframing of a series of interpretive choices. Foucault’s historicism is thus of a radical kind, which rejects appeals to static transcendental truths and principles of unity, origin and progress in history though its embrace of nominalism, contingency¹⁶³ In simpler terms therefore there is no prior object called ‘history’. Thus today while only innocent freshman would aspire to write history ‘as it really was’, most historians will readily concede that history writing is influenced by the historical circumstances of its production, and will acknowledge that because history is written, it is shaped by the resources of a linguistic community and the narrative conventions characterizing it.¹⁶⁴

Despite this there remains a belief that somehow the present can be fully accounted for

¹⁶² Krzysztof Ziarek, *The Historicity of Experience: Modernity, the Avant-Garde, and the Event*, Avant-Garde and Modernism Studies (Northwestern University Press, 2001).

¹⁶³ Mark Bevir, "What Is Genealogy?," *Journal of the Philosophy of History* 2 (2008).

¹⁶⁴ R. Radhakrishnan, *History, the Human, and the World Between* (Durham: Duke University Press, 2008).

by something called “history” which, albeit in a qualified sense, must ‘exist’, thereby enabling a distinction between history and myth, history and fiction.¹⁶⁵

Hence for Foucault, to the extent that historiography merely encodes the narrative of humanism and anthropology, a universal metaphysics of subjectivity,¹⁶⁶ it must be rejected. Historiography is itself the site of an ongoing battle. Foucault’s postmodernity, if one could even call it that¹⁶⁷, would be found instead in the restive ‘problematization’ of what is historically given. Indeed Foucault sought to examine and understand the modernist link between history writing, the state and subject formation. Therefore to be clear, to say that I am interested in writing a history of the present, what Dean calls an effective or critical history,¹⁶⁸ means to pay attention to what Foucault initially called the historical *a priori*. To follow Foucault’s “annexation of the present from the teleology of historical process and time, it is necessary to break with the teleological conception of the present itself as a unity of discrete but interdependent elements which are manifest in the historical moment.”¹⁶⁹ Thus when Foucault asks “what difference does today introduce with respect to yesterday?” he is effectively asking about the effects of the present on our comportment towards the past, reversing the assumed priority of the past of historicist thinking. If Foucault was led to argue that *Discipline and Punish* formed a “history of the

¹⁶⁵ See Fasolt for a lucid critique of conventional historical ideologies and practice; Constantin Fasolt, *The Limits of History* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2004). The idea that history is simply there for the rational methodological taking, that it pertains to common sense, is as Gramsci noted the surest sign of a hidden ideological sensibility.

¹⁶⁶ History as the story of collective Man. As Reinhart Koselleck notes prior to the Enlightenment ‘there was no history for which humanity might have been the subject’ The emergence of historiography thus corresponds to the emergence of a ‘collective singular’ “Man” as the object of history. Reinhart Koselleck, *Futures Past: On the Semantics of Historical Time*, ed. Thomas McCarthy, trans. Keith Tribe, Studies in Contemporary German Social Thought (New York: Columbia University Press, 2004).

¹⁶⁷ Beverley Southgate, *Postmodernism in History: Fear of Freedom?* (London: Routledge, 2003).

¹⁶⁸ Dean calls them effective and critical histories; Dean, *Critical and Effective Histories: Foucault's Methods and Historical Sociology*.

¹⁶⁹ Ibid., p. 52.

present” it was because the present was conceived as one traversed by revolts against the prison as a material instrument of power. As Foucault notes, “that punishment in general and the prison in particular belong to a political technology of the body is a lesson that I have learnt not so much from history as from the present”.¹⁷⁰ This present, then, is a struggle over the very mode of subjection and self-constitution. Genealogies therefore resist the enframing of history by historicism which regards history (*histoire*) as the only true of reality.

The immediate objection to thinking in terms of the historical *a priori*, would be that it somehow does not compute with common sense, or that it is “too theoretical”. I am in part convinced that the multiple crisis we now face are linked directly to the pragmatist demand to think in immediately “practical” terms. I reject therefore the kind of anti-theoretical, neo-pragmatist, neo-conservative, approaches to contemporary political history which are always in a rush to lay the funeral pyre of “theory.” Like Foucault therefore I strongly reject this very dichotomy between “theory and practice”, which is itself an extension of the Western humanist preference for identity over difference, for presence over absence, dichotomies rooted in the subject/object division that prefigures representational thinking in the age of world picture.¹⁷¹ Genealogy must be seen therefore as a problematizations of a range of “self-evidences.” There is not on the one hand, a real Pakistan, and then on the other hand the various discourses on it. There is no Islam that

¹⁷⁰ Michel Foucault, *Discipline and Punish: The Birth of the Prison*, trans. Alan Sheridan, Vintage (New York: Vintage Books, Random House, 1977), p 30-1.

¹⁷¹ See Heidegger, ‘Age of World Picture’ in Martin Heidegger, *Basic Writings: From Being and Time (1927) to the Task of Thinking (1964)*, 1964 (New York: HarperCollins, HarperSanFrancisco, 1977). For an extended critique of this binary see R. Radhakrishna, *Theory in an Uneven World* (Wiley-Blackwell, 2003). For a lucid critique of the false and reductive binaries of theory and practice, the real world and the ideal world, see Richard E. Palmer, *Hermeneutics: Interpretation Theory in Schleiermacher, Dilthey, Heidegger, and Gadamer*, Northwestern University Studies in Phenomenology and Existential Philosophy (Evanston: Northwestern University Press, 1988).

stands outside of historicity. As such the “way” in which we think and the “about” which we bring our reflections to bear on, are intimately intertwined. Everything as Heidegger would say is already in-the-world. I therefore regard the very distinction between theory and practice, interpretation and fact, as facile and unproductive; there is not therefore first the object as a given (Pakistan, Islam, Deoband history) and then only a series of thoughts about them. Nor am I of course privileging theory as somehow detached from the lived life world. Foucault was of course resolutely opposed to privileging either, and his genealogies unfold in the wake of a critique on the one hand of pragmatism and idealism and detached theoretical privilege on the other.

The debate as to whether Foucault was a historian or a philosopher therefore has a long provenance, and has once again been ignited by the interesting exchange between Han and Gutting.¹⁷² For me however Foucault’s project is both; a rigorous attempt to combine historical and philosophical thinking — a mode of interrogation which “problematizes man’s relation to the present”. Therefore in this study of political Islam I seek to problematize our relation to history rather than merely account for or explain its chronological sequence and emergence. In order to do so it must be clear that Foucault’s archeological investigations were aimed at interrogating this historical *a priori*, a method that is later complimented by genealogy which is an interrogation of relationships of power. There is thus an important homology between power and the *a priori* that requires a measure of clarification. Additionally it is important to note that Foucault was not writing an *a priori* history, on the contrary, he tries to write a history of the *a priori*.¹⁷³

¹⁷² B. Han-Pile, "Is Early Foucault a Historian?," *Philosophy & Social Criticism* 31, no. 5-6 (2005); and Gutting.

¹⁷³ Han, *Foucault's Critical Project: Between the Transcendental and the Historical*.

Background: The Space of the Political

In his essay *Subjectivity and Truth*, Foucault describes his work as “a genealogy of the modern subject”,¹⁷⁴ or the historical process of subjectification. He writes, “I have tried to get out from the *philosophy* of the subject through a *genealogy* of this subject, by studying the constitution of the subject across history which has led us up to the modern concept of the self ... *the question of the historicity of the subject*.”¹⁷⁵ He specifies that his method for constructing a genealogy of the subject is an “archaeology of knowledge [*savoir*]”, whereas the domain of the analysis are the various “technologies” or “hermeneutics of the self”; the various intersections between certain types of practices and techniques of the subject (confession, asceticism, etc.), with scientific discourses about the subject (criminology, psychiatry, etc.). Foucault, as he would himself go on to declare, was never interested in a theory of power as such, but rather was concerned with an embodied subjectivity always already situated within a field of power relationships. It is critical therefore to say something about this *savoir* ‘field’.

Foucault’s thought links up with the phenomenological tradition¹⁷⁶ in at least two senses: (1) it is a critical inquiry into the conditions of possibility of knowledge and the historicity of reason; and (2) as a philosophical study of the subject, it is an effort to rethink critically the phenomenological subject.¹⁷⁷ Foucault’s approach might be compared with the phenomenological approach to subjectivity that Charles Taylor takes

¹⁷⁴ Michel Foucault, *The Politics of Truth*, Foreign Agents (Semiotext(e), 2007), p. 149.

¹⁷⁵ Ibid., p. 150 emphasis mine.

¹⁷⁶ While Foucault certainly wrote against both hermeneutics and phenomenology, it was the phenomenology in the tradition of Husserl, the concern for intentionality, and not Heidegger, the concern for being, the Foucault rejected. See Herbert Dreyfus and Paul Rabinow, *Michel Foucault: Beyond Structuralism and Hermeneutics* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1983).

¹⁷⁷ Johanna Oksala, *Foucault on Freedom*, Modern European Philosophy (Cambridge University Press, 2005).

in his *Sources of the Self*. Taylor, building upon Rorty and Heidegger develops a phenomenology of the subject that seeks to counter the predominance of Cartesian logics in modern epistemology and social theory. In its early neo-Kantian career, modern liberal social theory, Taylor argues, had taken an erroneous turn (into the metaphysics of subjectivity and presence) insofar as it conceived the self to be sovereign, atomistic, and only contingently bound to its cultural or historical surroundings.¹⁷⁸ What many of these theories miss is an understanding of the silent contextual background that determines the condition of possibility of knowledge and meaning. In his latest formidable work, *A Secular Age*, Taylor, echoing Heidegger's being-in-the-world, writes that all beliefs "are held within a context or framework of the *taken-for-granted*, which usually remains tacit, and may even be as yet unacknowledged by the agent, because never formulated."¹⁷⁹ This notion of a framework of tacit belief is similar to what Heidegger and phenomenologists more generally articulate as the "background" of human understanding. Foucault himself is also concerned with this background as he adopts the Heideggerian concept of *umwelt* and reformulates it in terms of *milieu*. It is this shared background¹⁸⁰ that provides the condition of possibility for the intelligibility of our very sense of ourselves as particular kinds of subjects. That is to say we dwell in a space of unarticulated and shared context of significances. Critically then for Foucault and phenomenology is the notion that most of these evaluations are never explicitly thematized, or even formulated as beliefs; they are the unthought of any culture. As Heidegger would say they simply show up in the

¹⁷⁸ Charles Taylor, *Sources of the Self* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1989).

¹⁷⁹ ———, *A Secular Age* (Belknap Press, 2007), p 13.

¹⁸⁰ Or pre-ontological understanding, elaborated in Heidegger's famous characterization of equipmentality in *Being and Time*, namely the distinction between ready-to-hand and present-at-hand. See Hubert L. Dreyfus, *Being-in-the-World: A Commentary on Heidegger's Being and Time, Div I* (Cambridge: MIT Press, 1991).

way we do things, in our *practices*. It is this holistic network of shared significances and practices that precedes and first makes possible both our consciousness of and our engagement with the world. Foucault is thus interested in this background, this *milieu*, this space or field of power relationships which always already shows up as a particular “order of things”.

The concept of a background, or historical *a priori*, can thus illuminate what Foucault had in mind with terms like *archive* the *statement* and the *episteme*. The brief definition of the *a priori* that Foucault offers in *The Order of Things*, suggests that the *a priori* is that which ‘in a given period, carves out in experience a field of possible knowledge [savoir], [and] defines the mode of being of the objects which appear in that field.’¹⁸¹ Like the phenomenologists, namely Heidegger and Merleau-Ponty, whose conceptual apparatus he modified, Foucault was concerned with showing that this background field of human understanding is not embedded in formal ideas and concepts (as ideology) but rather consists in the various modes of embodied sociality and concrete socio-political practice. Hence for Foucault, the liberal-atomist picture of the sovereign human subject, a subject that is isolable from her culture or history, presupposes an impossible dissociation from its very conditions of possibility. In short the liberal subject does not and cannot make sense. Taylor makes a similar claim: “We are in fact all acting, thinking, and feeling out of backgrounds and frameworks which we do not fully understand. To ascribe total personal responsibility to us for these is to want to leap out of the human condition.”¹⁸² For Foucault this background is not a transcendental

¹⁸¹ We can surmise that the name that Foucault gives to this field in general is biopower, a biopower that operates increasingly as the logic of neoliberalism, a space where things (entities, people, the earth) show up as resources and commodities

¹⁸² Taylor, p 387.

structure, but is rather given to us historically, and yet it is not itself historical, precisely because it does not simply correlate with a sequence of texts or sayings. That is to say the form of the historical *a priori* is not formal or logical, and this is clear from Foucault's rejection of structuralism. Instead the background in defining the limits of what can be said, itself constitutes an episteme. It is the episteme then which, within its spatial and temporal limits, can determine what shows up as significant, admissible, acceptable, or possible for any given culture and epoch. Foucault's task then was to isolate the series of historical events which lead to a rupture or shift in the background of discursive and social practices. Crucially the analysis of discourse is not aimed at isolating some distinct transcendental realm of rules and conditions, i.e. an über-structure, but rather it aims at disclosing 'the conditions of existence' of statements as opposed to the conditions of possibility.

Foucault thus takes this phenomenological idea of a background, and subjects it to a series of transformations and reformulations throughout his prolific career. Taylor goes on to call this background the "social imaginary" which he defines as "that common understanding which makes possible common practices, and a widely shared sense of legitimacy."¹⁸³ For Foucault this social imaginary is a field or network where a multiplicity of force relations intersect. This social imaginary, this *milieu*, space, field, site or background, has in Foucault a number of corresponding avatars — episteme, the historical *a priori*, the statement, the archive, the assemblage — and it is precisely his "methods" of arch-genealogy (and later problematizations) that he fashions to interrogate and think this structuring, historical unthought and silent background. However because

¹⁸³ Charles Taylor, *Modern Social Imaginaries*, ed. Jane Kramer eds. Dilip Goankar, Benjamin Lee, Michael Warner, Public Planet Books (Durham: Duke University Press, 2004).

this background is not held or specified in formal “theoretical” terms, it cannot be understood from a straightforward reading of the historical record, such as the spoken contents of a *khutba* or the texts on the syllabi of a *madaris*. I would like to make the claim that very few scholars working on political Islam have in mind, at least explicitly, this notion of the background.¹⁸⁴ In some of his early work Foucault would go so far as to assert that it is the historical *a priori* that “provides a foundation for, and makes possible, all the empirical sciences of order”,¹⁸⁵ that “in any given culture and at any given moment, there is always only one episteme that defines the conditions of possibility of all knowledge [*savoir*], whether expressed in a theory or silently invested in a practice”.¹⁸⁶ While Foucault may have nuanced such singular, totalizing and quasi-structuralist designations of the background, we can certainly see how in finally offering the concept of biopolitics, that he was signaling to the way in which governmentality names an ordering or enframing of biopolitical space, an ordering which is increasingly neoliberal and technological in its modality.¹⁸⁷

If we are correct then in assuming that the nature of the social imaginary or the background (the field, the historical *a priori*), is increasingly being shaped by a biopolitical and neoliberal imperative, then turning our gaze towards the “biopolitical horizon” will gain added significance. As Agamben suggests, the “enigmas” of modern violence, can only be solved, “on the terrain – biopolitics – on which they were

¹⁸⁴ As a genealogist himself, the work of Talal Asad would of course be one obvious exception. See Asad, *Genealogies of Religion: Discipline and Reasons of Power in Christianity and Islam*.

¹⁸⁵ Michel Foucault, *The Order of Things: An Archaeology of the Human Sciences*, Vintage (New York: Vintage Books, Random House, 1973), p. 71.

¹⁸⁶ Ibid.

¹⁸⁷ Thus as Agamben, Elden and Rayner suggest, biopolitics is an unfolding of the order of *technē*, or *Gestell*.

formed.”¹⁸⁸ On Agamben’s diagnosis, the inevitable failure of biopolitics, leads to the proliferation of an increasingly sovereign mentality. The consequences of this shift for an analysis of political Islam may be of huge practical significance, if indeed as I am suggesting, the very background of modernity is obscured. That is to say when we place the phenomenon of Islamist violence, and the conflict between (radical) Islam and the West, against this background horizon of biopolitics, a new series of potential insight may begin to develop. These insights would treat the nature of political space holistically; as an arena of the contestations of powers (sovereign and biopolitical) rather than as a struggle between liberal subjects¹⁸⁹ and the medieval ideologies of religious fundamentalism. Also a realistic solution that does not privilege intentionality and subjectivity as the driving forces behind violence, will allow us to shift our attention from the preoccupation to reform the ‘ulama and the *madaris*, towards “fixing” the broader political space in which the *madaris* is situated. It is in this sense that one of the essential

¹⁸⁸ Agamben, *Homo Sacer: Sovereign Power and Bare Life*.

¹⁸⁹ Because both traditional idealist and realist conceptions fail to do justice to the complexities of the self-world relationship, both its present and absent dimension, Heidegger regularly deploys the term *Dasein* which was no doubt influential on the way in which Foucault thought about the human subject.. Heidegger chose this word in part to avoid invoking the accretion of a series of historical errors, and conceptual limitations associated with more familiar terms like the self, human being, person, individual, agent, etc. *Dasein* is literally the human being that is there (*Da*), and questions its *topos*, its place, as an existing being. As Heidegger remarks *Dasein* is “the being for whom the question of being is a question”. *Dasein* is also *being-in-the-world*. The significance of these elementary gestures is not neologism for the sake of obscurity, but deflection: away from deeply ingrained traditional (idealist) metaphysical conceptions of the relationship between subject/object, human/world. The significance then of *Dasein* lies in its lack of transparency, and gestures to the deep and constitutive historical web of relations with other beings, other events, other things. *Dasein*’s “facticity” hence exceeds any list of properties we may conjure up for it, ascribe to it, or describe from the surface. Heidegger deploys the term *factual life* to signal the irreducible richness of existence, and the shortcomings of any theoretical description of life. *Dasein* is thus always immersed in a specific situation responding and contributing to its dynamic environment. Heidegger’s turn then to both anthropology and history lies in this attempt to capture the complex, sedimented and murky nature of *Dasein*’s everyday performance of being in the world. See Dreyfus, *Being-in-the-World: A Commentary on Heidegger's Being and Time, Div I*, Mark Wrathall and Jeff Malpas, eds., *Heidegger, Coping, and Cognitive Science: Essays in Honor of Hubert L. Dreyfus*, vol. Vol. 2 (The MIT Press, 2000), and Miguel De Beistegui, *Truth and Genesis: Philosophy as Differential Ontology*, Studies in Continental Thought (Indiana University Press, 2004).

components of the space of exception, the military, is crucial for understanding the sovereign transformation of the Deoband.

Knowledge (Savoir/Connaissance)

It must be clear then from the outset that what we are interested in, that towards which our analytical gaze is directed, is a comportment from the *thought* towards the *unthought*; toward the *savoir*, from the given empirical grounds of knowledge as *connaissance*. At its most elementary any genealogy must be cognizant of this distinction, and my contention here in part, and the novelty to some degree of this analysis, lies in its disclosure of this cite. I have characterized this cite as a metacolonial space, that is to say a political space; a quasi-matrix which forms the grounds of intelligibility of knowledge and practices. The primary characterization, or coloration, of this horizon is biopolitical. This horizon is also at once and simultaneously a space of exception. In this space the play between sovereign power and bare life has reached a maximum and deadly intensity. Given the importance of this unthought, it will be necessary to offer some guiding and preliminary clarifications.

In *Mapping the Present*, Stuart Elden's pioneering project of spatial history, he makes a simultaneous call to both historians and geographers, to "spatialize history and historicize space."¹⁹⁰ In Elden's work, given the central motif of space, Foucault's history of the present is re-framed as a "mapping of the present." Such a mapping of the present is a spatial history, rather than a history of space. Given that for Foucault, space is

¹⁹⁰ Stuart Elden, *Mapping the Present: Heidegger, Foucault and the Project of a Spatial History* (Continuum International Publishing Group, 2002), p. 6. Elden was perhaps one of the first authors to explicitly suggest thinking of Foucault's genealogy as a historical ontology, that is to say as way of writing and thinking the history of being. In Elden's formulation genealogy is "recast as historical ontology, which is framed as a critique of the present."

fundamental to the exercise of power — power puts things in place, it orders and disposes, it *relations* — the genealogical project (and by extension my project of the metacolonial) is fundamentally concerned with the spatiality of the political, that is to say it is a historical/genealogical interrogation of political space. Space, Elden reminds us “is inherently political” and “politics is inherently spatial.”¹⁹¹ Elden’s path-breaking work on Foucault and Heidegger has needless to say been essential to my project.

Within this work Elden highlights the critical significance of a distinction that Foucault makes in *The Archaeology of Knowledge* — which examines the historical *a priori* at the level of the archive — between *connaissance* and *savoir*. The singular translation of both terms in English as knowledge, blurs what is perhaps the most significant aspect of Foucault’s entire *œuvre*.¹⁹² The *savoir* is what Foucault calls “the space of knowledge”,¹⁹³ and his archaeology, as a style of critical historical investigation, addresses itself “to the general space of knowledge [*savoir*], to its configurations, and to the *mode of being* of the things that appear in it.”¹⁹⁴ The concepts of the ‘historical *a priori*’, episteme, the statement and the archive developed in *The Order of Things* and *The Archaeology of Knowledge*, are all rather incomprehensible without attention to the *connaissance/savoir* distinction.¹⁹⁵ Additionally the later range of Foucault’s entire conceptual vocabulary — *dispositif*, technologies, the history of the present, space, knowledge and bio-power — all become much clearer when we understand the historical, epistemological and ontological level at which Foucault directs his critical gaze. Keeping

¹⁹¹ Ibid.

¹⁹² As Elden perceptively notes, this distinction corresponds to Heidegger’s ontic/ontological difference.

¹⁹³ Foucault, *The Order of Things: An Archaeology of the Human Sciences*, p. xxii.

¹⁹⁴ Ibid. Archaeology defines the mode of being of the *savoir* systems as a “positivity”. I will turn to Agamben’s crucial discussion of Foucault’s deployment of term positivity below.

¹⁹⁵ I will return to this below, in light of Agamben’s discussion of the Foucaultian ‘statement’ in *Remnants*

in mind the *connaissance/savoir* distinction “allows us to see both the continuity between archaeology and genealogy”.¹⁹⁶ Needless to say this difference is crucial to my biopolitical analysis, especially as it plays itself out across the *‘ilm* (knowledge) of the ‘ulama. Most scholarship on Islam can thus be characterized as a concern almost exclusively with *connaissance*. For this project an illumination of the *savoir*, a *savoir* which is sutured by knowledge-power, will be decisive in our metacolonial reading of the ‘ulama’s crossing of a biopolitical threshold. This distinction of the type of analysis can further be seen as a difference between understanding and explanation.¹⁹⁷ Again most histories are explanations. In this sense it is important to note that what I am aiming for in this study is an *understanding* of political Islam, and less the generation of knowledge, historical or otherwise, *about* political Islam. Thus we can formulate another distinction between knowledge (*connaissance*) and understanding (*savoir*) in order to locate our primary conceptual horizon within the later. Of course the relationship between the *savoir* and the *connaissance* is symbiotic, and neither constitutes a pure isolated space. The problem, perhaps as Foucault saw it, is that the type of histories he opposed were merely absorbed in the production of knowledge as *connaissance*, and failed to interrogate the *savoir*. This is indeed the basic strategy that Foucault sets out in the *Archeology of Knowledge* with its analysis of discourse which aims to isolate ‘the

¹⁹⁶ Elden, *Mapping the Present: Heidegger, Foucault and the Project of a Spatial History*, p. 152. A similar ontological distinction between the political and politics, is critical to post-foundational political theory, and thinkers such as Jean-Luc Nancy and Ernesto Laclau. See Marchart, *Post-Foundational Political Thought: Political Difference in Nancy, Lefort, Badiou and Laclau*.

¹⁹⁷ See Karl-Otto Apel, *Understanding and Explanation: A Transcendental-Pragmatic Perspective*, ed. Thomas McCarthy, trans. Georgia Warnke, *Studies in Contemporary German Social Thought* (Cambridge: MIT Press, 1984).. But what I have in mind here is Heidegger’s own crucial distinction between *understanding*, the tool of hermeneutic/ontological inquiry, and knowledge, the tool of analytical/ontic inquiry. Foucault’s was thus investigating what Heidegger called the “worlding of the world.” Thus Foucault’s general strategic direction with respect the critique of knowledge can be said to be in line with Heidegger’s privileging of the ontological over the epistemological, that is to say Foucault is concerned with (Heideggerian) conditions of existence and not merely (Kantian) conditions of possibility.

conditions of existence'¹⁹⁸ of statements as opposed to the conditions of possibility or content of discourse.¹⁹⁹ Thus in a very rough way we can say that Foucault's critical histories were aimed at an analysis, or rather disclosure, of *langue* rather than *parole*. What limits most studies of political Islam, and general histories of Pakistan, is their exclusive concern with the analysis of propositions rather than what Foucault called (somewhat regretfully) *statements*. The analysis of a discursive regime thus takes place at a level which is not equivalent to the set of texts or speeches that an institution formally articulates.

The Historical a priori

Foucault borrows the term *a priori* from Kant's transcendental philosophy, for whom space and time are *a priori*. This is because in Kant's view we do not discover time and space through experience; rather, experience itself would not be possible without space and time in the first place. Thus the *a priori* is a condition of possibility for experience. Kant's primary question was of course, following Descartes, a question about the limits and possibility of knowledge; whether true knowledge of the world is possible. For Kant this question was intrinsically connected to the introduction of the distinction between the empirical and the transcendental (*a priori*). Kant however invariably re-grounds transcendental knowledge within the experience of the subject, thus anthropomorphizing all knowledge, and setting up the representations of Man as the

¹⁹⁸ "The analysis of the discursive field is orientated [in order to] grasp the statement in the exact specificity of its occurrence; determine its *conditions of existence*, fix at least its limits, establish its correlations with other statements that may be connected with it, and show what other forms of statement it excludes. ... a *statement is always an event* that neither the language (*langue*) nor the meaning can quite exhaust." Michel Foucault, *The Archeology of Knowledge & the Discourse of Language* (New York: Pantheon Books, 1982), p. 28, Emphasis mine.

¹⁹⁹ More on Foucault's *episteme* and statement below.

ultimate guarantor of truth. In his commentary on Kant's *Anthropology*,²⁰⁰ Foucault, showed how this re-centering of the transcendental *a priori*, within the empirical experience of the human subject, sets up the subject as paradoxically providing the conditions of possibility for its own knowledge. Kant therefore seeks "within human finitude the elements of a transcendental determination henceforth made impossible in principle by the anthropological confusion between the empirical and the *a priori*."²⁰¹ Neo-Kantian's regard the *a priori* as a term pertaining to the limits of human knowledge. That is to say, many philosophers think that the *a priori* refers a certain kind human knowledge that exists before an experience occurs, even if they only know it tacitly in some sort of background manner. Thus in *The Order of Things* Foucault introduces his famous critique of man and his "empiric-transcendental doublet" which is imprisoned by the Kantian 'analytic of finitude', an analytic which is itself a result of the monopolization of the field of possible knowledge by "man." It is imperative therefore to see the way in which Foucault's genealogy is an extension of his critique of humanism and the constitutional primacy of the subject.²⁰² Most histories of political Islam I would argue, are caught implicitly in the winds of this humanism.

The significance of the a historical *a priori* for understanding Foucault's genealogical and archeological method cannot be overstated, and has been highlighted by Han in her recent study of Foucault's critical project.²⁰³ She shows how for Foucault, the

²⁰⁰ Michel Foucault, *Introduction to Kant's Anthropology*, trans. Roberto Nigro, (Semiotext(E) / Foreign Agents) (Semiotext(e), 2008).

²⁰¹ Han, *Foucault's Critical Project: Between the Transcendental and the Historical*.

²⁰² See Cronin, *Foucault's Anti-humanist Historiography*. Foucault was of course also influenced by Heidegger, phenomenological reversal of the *a priori*. The *a priori* is not what humans *know* first, but what *is* first. Thus the *a priori*, pertains to being, rather than knowing

²⁰³ Han, *Foucault's Critical Project: Between the Transcendental and the Historical*.. By translating Foucault's commentary on Kant's *Anthropology*, Han performed a significant service for Foucauldians, much as Ann Laura Stoler did with her précis of *Society Must Be Defended* in *Race and the Education of*

Kantian *a priori*, becomes the historical *a priori*, the historical conditions for the possibility of knowledge [*savoir*]. This historical *a priori* is neither the Kantian *a priori*, a necessary precondition for experience, nor some a historical logical structure, a Platonic form. Rather it points to something like the condition of the possibility for the very intelligibility of the real. However Foucault's development of the historical *a priori*, which undergoes successive reformulations through his career, is eventually unable to escape a certain contradiction. To overcome this impasse Foucault discovers "power". The use of the term power, allows Foucault to move from archaeology to genealogy, which is represented by a shift of concern from knowledge as such to knowledge bound up with the discursivity of practices and power. This allows Foucault to understand the historical *a priori* in explicitly political terms, through his development of the concept of 'power-knowledge', where power and knowledge are seen as inseparably intertwined. Thus power can be thought of as a certain *condition of possibility*; that which places and *relations*, but does not exist as it were outside of the field in which it is composed and which it composes. The space of investigation of the metacolonial is therefore an *a priori* space.

Foucault's history is therefore taking place at a different level than everyday history. As he notes at the close of his preface to *The Birth of Clinic*:

The research that I am undertaking here therefore involves a project that is deliberately *both historical and critical*, in that it is concerned ... with determining *the conditions of possibility* of medical experience in modern

Desire, which brought to the fore Foucault's concern with the biopolitics of race; Ann Laura Stoler, *Race and the Education of Desire: Foucault's History of Sexuality and the Colonial Order of Things* (Durham: Duke University Press, 1995).

times ... it is a structural study that sets out to disentangle the conditions of its history from within the density of its discourse ...²⁰⁴

This is thus an early formulation of the historical *a priori*, the investigation of which required archeology. Archaeology was thus an investigation of the *a priori*, understood as an episteme or that which “makes knowledge [*savoir*] possible.”²⁰⁵ During the archaeological period Foucault’s guiding concern was precisely this: the question of the *conditions of the possibility of knowledge (savoir)*. In later years this was then followed by genealogy which concerned itself with power and “regimes of truth”. In each case the historical investigations were concerned with “*the relations between the subject, truth and the constitution of experience*”.²⁰⁶

Episteme

Foucault who introduces the term episteme in the *Archaeology*, effectively aims to get a handle on this historical *a priori* structure of intelligibility. The episteme in Foucault’s early archeological phase thus designates a horizon of intelligibility. Knowledge is thus stamped, *a priori*, with an episteme, which allows entities to show up in a particular way. By analyzing statements in light of their enunciative function, Foucault seeks to understand the intelligibility of discursive acts ‘not with reference to

²⁰⁴ Michel Foucault, *The Birth of the Clinic: An Archaeology of Medical Perception*, Vintage (New York: Vintage Books, 1994), p. xix, my italics. Of course as his career progressed Foucault, distanced himself from the structuralist connotations of this early work.

²⁰⁵ Foucault, *The Order of Things: An Archaeology of the Human Sciences*, p. 31.

²⁰⁶ Michel Foucault, *Michel Foucault: Politics, Philosophy, Culture* (New York & London: Routledge, 1988), p. 48.

the interiority of an intention, a thought, or a subject, but in accordance with the dispersion of an *exteriority*.²⁰⁷

In *The Archaeology of Knowledge*, Foucault refines the notion of episteme, developed in *Order of Things*, and introduces the concept of the *archive*, which he defines as ‘the general *system* of the formation and transformation of statements.’ The notion of the episteme was itself a way for disclosing, or at least gesturing towards, the historical *a priori* of an epoch, that is to say the historical conditions of possibility of knowledge in a particular period. Foucault’s archaeology can thus also be seen as a political rival of Derridian deconstruction.²⁰⁸ The episteme is thus recast as “total set of relations that unite, at a given period, the discursive practices that give rise to epistemological figures, sciences, and possibly formalized systems.”²⁰⁹ In Foucault’s later genealogies the episteme is designated as an element of the broader concept of the apparatus (*dispositif*): ‘the episteme is a specifically discursive apparatus, whereas the apparatus in its general form is both discursive and non-discursive, its elements being much more heterogeneous’²¹⁰ The episteme is simply decoupled from any assumption about the autonomy of language and discourse and linked more substantially with the enframing operations of power and the various socio-political apparatus that extend

²⁰⁷ Foucault, *The Archeology of Knowledge & the Discourse of Language*, p. 125.

²⁰⁸ Both in turn trace their concepts to Heidegger’s *Destruktion*; the historical deconstruction of the metaphysical tradition. For Heidegger, as Ian Thompson clarifies, “the metaphysical tradition establishes both the fundamental and the ultimate conceptual parameter’s of intelligibility by ontologically grounding and theologically legitimating our changing historical sense of *what is*. Heidegger’s notorious antipathy to metaphysics thus obscures the fact that on his view, it is metaphysics which unifies and secures our successive historical “epochs”. A series of metaphysical ontotheologies anchor our successive constellations of historical intelligibility, temporarily securing the intelligible order by grasping it from both ends of the conceptual scale simultaneously (as it were), both ontologically (from the inside out) and theologically (from the outside in).” Iain Thomson, *Heidegger on Ontotheology: Technology and the Politics of Education* (Cambridge University Press, 2005).

²⁰⁹ Foucault, *The Archeology of Knowledge & the Discourse of Language*, p. 191.

²¹⁰ ———, *Aesthetics, Method, and Epistemology*, p. 197.

discourse its effectivity. Hence the concept of the episteme becomes a 'regime of discourses'; the effects of power that arise from a play of statements that have hardened into an apparatus or *dispositif*. Discursive regimes are thus the sway of discourses of knowledge that have congealed into specific arrangements and *dispositifs* (apparatus).

Foucault's *Order*, which designates the reigning episteme, is linked to both Man and History with a capital 'H'. "In any given culture and at any given moment", Foucault writes, "there is only one episteme that defines the conditions of possibility of all knowledge, whether expressed in a theory or silently invested in a practice".²¹¹ Foucault's target then is the very episteme of man. "Man" will later become the subject of his archaeology of knowledge, a subject which comprises the 'historical *a priori*' of modern thought. The episteme "establishes for every man, from the very first, the empirical orders with which he will be dealing and within which he will be at home."²¹² The historical *a priori* designates an attempt to map the epistemic ordering of things,²¹³ a study of the placement effect of the newly emerging forms of scientific discourses. The historical *a priori* is thus a structuring code embedded in cultural practice and scientific discourse, a code whose function is to fashion, or order, the place of things within a space of knowledge. In this way the notion of the historical *a priori* designates a spatial effect, an early attempt to think the *polis* as a space of knowledge/power. Foucault's interest in archaeo-genealogical analysis then

... does not belong to the history of ideas or of science: it is rather an inquiry whose aim is to rediscover *on what basis* knowledge and theory became possible; within what *space of order* knowledge was constituted;

²¹¹ ———, *The Order of Things: An Archaeology of the Human Sciences*, p. 168.

²¹² Ibid., p. xx. Foucault's analysis of three epistemes (renaissance, classical and modern) can be loosely correlated with Heidegger's five major epochs, or different ways of understanding what beings are; the pre-Socratic, ancient, medieval, modern and late modern period of technological enframing (*Gestell*).

²¹³ The dominant metaphysics of the age.

on the basis of what historical *a priori* and in the element of what positivity, ideas could appear, sciences be established, experience be reflected in philosophies, rationalities be formed, only.²¹⁴

Discourse and Statement

As the archaeology of our thought easily shows, man is an invention of recent date. And one perhaps nearing its end. If those arrangements were to disappear as they appeared ... then one can certainly wager that man would be erased, like a face drawn in sand at the edge of the sea.²¹⁵

Foucault closes the pages of his dense *Archaeology* with the enigmatic Nietzschean remark; “ ‘Discourse is not life: its time is not your time; in it, you will not be reconciled to death; you may have killed God beneath the weight of all that you have said; but don’t imagine that, with all that you are saying, you will make a man that will live longer than he.’ ”²¹⁶ What is this remark if not simply a frontal assault on the modes of everyday intelligibility, of representational thought even in its most deepest state of questioning? As we know in the evolution of Foucault’s terminology, *discourse*—which now combines and further develops the earlier notion of the archive and the statement (*énoncés*) from the *Archaeology*, and the *episteme* from *The Order of Things*—brings together more overtly the problematizations of knowledge-power within language. I therefore disagree with those numerous interpretations of Foucault which suggest on the one hand that he abandons the project of archaeology and the statements in favor of genealogy (discourse and power) and on the other, that his late ethical turn represents a belated return to the subject and an absolution of an ultimately pessimistic and totalizing

²¹⁴ Foucault, *The Order of Things: An Archaeology of the Human Sciences*, p. xxii, emphasis mine.

²¹⁵ Ibid., p. 387. Earlier in the preface he calls man “a kind of rift in the order of things... a configuration whose outlines are determined by the new position he has so recently taken up in the field of knowledge” (ibid, p. xxiii).

²¹⁶ ———, *The Archeology of Knowledge & the Discourse of Language*, p. 211.

conception of power which prohibits the possibility of ethical agency and effective political resistance. Such interpretations effectively suggest that Foucault's work is a series of conceptual abandonments; genealogy and power rejecting archaeology, ethics and the care of the self rejecting power. Needless to say I regard both these interpretations as premised on the very erasure of the *connaissance/savoir* indistinction that Foucault is trying to overcome. I am therefore in agreement with Jeffery Nealon's recent thesis,²¹⁷ which confirms essential continuities between Foucault's entire *œuvre*, and formulates it as the history of the intensifications of power. By placing Foucault's work within the paradigm of historical intensifications and dispersions of power, we can see that his triangulation of knowledge, power and the subject does not disappear in his ethical phase, in favor of rescuing some notion of a free and ultimately heroic agent. Foucault's anti-humanism remains consistent with his later work on *askēsis*.²¹⁸ Rather, if we understand the subject as intrinsically entangled with power and knowledge, the task of genealogy is first and foremost a disclosure of the power/knowledge networks and governmentalities which constitutes and structure the subjects grid of intelligibility and possibility.

From the view points of a more conventional Foucaultian uptake of the concept, discourse simply refers to the use of language as it is embedded in social and institutional practices. Discourses are institutionalized, regulated or normative way of talking about, making statements about, or representing/signifying (through speech and text) the socio-political world. They consists of utterances and statements that can be grouped and regulated to form a coherent, bounded and identifiable system of thought, e.g. medical,

²¹⁷ Nealon, *Foucault Beyond Foucault: Power and Its Intensifications since 1984*.

²¹⁸ McGushin, *Foucault's Askēsis: An Introduction to the Philosophical Life*.

psychiatric, patriotic, or theological discourses. In this way discourses define the terms of debate and acceptable limits of “speech” and understanding, through processes of exclusion. It is within such bounded rule governed systems, enacted in specific social contexts by designated experts, that discourses have force and meaning. These expert and authoritative discourses affect the way we see and understand reality, governing our sense of the possibilities of self and identity.²¹⁹ Discourse in this sense was central to Said’s critique of *Orientalism*. By emphasizing the social, political and functional aspects of language, traditional discourse analysis thus seeks to examine the unspecified rules governing language use: the way in which language is deployed within wider social structures of regulation for the control and production of meanings and subjectivity. Discourses are thus part of the entire socio-political edifice, producing social structure and practices as well as being produced by it. At its most general then Foucault’s deployment of discourse alerts us to the general relationship between language and power; “it is in discourse that power and knowledge are joined together.” A discourse is thus both a knowledge regime, a normalized practice and a site/space of power. However without a sense of the distinction between knowledge (*savoir*) and knowledge (*connaissance*), the way in which Said uses discourse, and the way Foucault intended it, are almost incompatible. Similarly Said’s worldliness is radically different from the worldliness of Foucault. For Foucault, who is doubtless indebted to the Heidegger concept of facticity, life is our existence as openness to “world.”²²⁰ World then is the

²¹⁹ Of course in complex societies subjects (identities) are constituted through multiple, competing, often contradictory discourses.

²²⁰ As we know from Heidegger, “world” is not the sum total of entities surrounding us, it is not simply the contents of the infinite expanse of Cartesian space. Rather being-in-the-world is *disclosedness*. We do not stand as subjects over and against some entity called world. Rather world is the totality, not of signs, but the web of significance from out of which entities show themselves or are encountered.

totality of signification.²²¹ Without a doubt Foucault attempts to illuminate this world, this space of power, with his concept of biopolitics.

It is well known that Foucault's turn towards genealogy was not because he disavowed archaeology as a method, but rather because archaeology was primarily an attempt to understand language in its phenomenological specificity, as that which shows, as language in its materiality (that which makes matter, that which makes significance), and not merely as an epiphenomenon of some essential subjects standing behind and merely using language. Archaeological analysis "directs us from the interiority of the speech act to the exteriority of the statement as discursive formation. By thinking to encounter the historical exteriority of statements, and by mapping this dispersion in a work of critique, the archaeologist produces a work that works to turn thought in the direction of the outside."²²² A *discursive formation* is thus not comprised of its specific thematic content, or elements, but rather by the rules or system that govern the formation of knowledge objects. The basic characteristic of a discursive formation or regime is that it is a rule-governed system, or better, the System, or Order of governing rules; the order of governmentality.²²³ It is in the notion of the discursive regime that the seeds of Foucault's concept of governmentality are sown; governmentality as effectively an

²²¹ Oksala has also noted the similarities between Foucault's notion of *episteme* in *The Order of Things* and Heidegger's overall strategy in the essay "The Age of the World Picture." The disclosure of an "ontological order upon which the sciences as well as the everyday practices characteristic of an age are grounded. ... The world picture, like Foucault's concept of *episteme*, thus refers to the overall schema, the implicit order of things, on the basis of which reality is comprehended." Oksala, *Foucault on Freedom*.

²²² Timothy Rayner, *Foucault's Heidegger: Philosophy and Transformative Experience*, Continuum Studies in Continental Philosophy (Continuum International Publishing Group, 2007). Biopower is the name for a system which precludes the thought of the outside.

²²³ Which as Agamben suggests in his lecture *Power and Glory*, has taken on the primary form of *oikonomia*. Foucault sees neoliberalism as an expression of the *dispositif*, a novel mode of the art of governing; a new mode of social power.

‘ordering attitude and behaviour’.²²⁴ The aim of an archaeology of any discourse, scientific or Islamic, is thus not to analyze the content of the discourse, but rather to identify these governing rules (the governmentality), the historical *a priori*, in their historical manifestation. Foucaultian discourse then has the function of world-disclosure.

Put another way the concept of discourse was fashioned as a way for Foucault to provide his histories of the present within phenomenological depth. And it was only with the introduction of the seemingly more tangible concept of power, inserted more concretely through his notion of genealogy and discourse, that allowed him to probe the pressing political and material questions of the day. As such discourses in Foucault are simply a new more concrete way to talk about statements (*énoncés*) whose phenomenological and quasi-structuralist resonance were largely ignored by his historical and social science oriented audience. As Agamben notes, the “incomparable novelty of *The Archaeology of Knowledge* consists in having explicitly taken as its object neither sentences nor propositions but precisely “statements,” that is, not the text of discourse but its taking place.”²²⁵ Agamben notes that Foucault wrote

with lucid awareness of his [archaeological] method’s ontological implications: “the statement is not therefore a structure ... it is a function of existence” (Foucault 1972: 86). In other words: enunciation is not a thing determined by real, definite properties; it is, rather, pure existence, the fact that a certain being – language – takes place.

Hence as Agamben clarifies, the statement (*énoncés*) does not refer to a text but to “a pure event of language” whose “territory cannot coincide with a definite level of linguistic analysis (the sentence, the proposition, illocutive acts, etc.),” but rather with “a

²²⁴ An attitude or mood that characterizes the ontological mode of technology see Martin Heidegger, *The Question Concerning Technology*, trans. William Lovitt (New York: Harper & Row, Harper TorchBooks, 1977), p. 21-2.

²²⁵ Agamben, *Remnants of Auschwitz : The Witness and the Archive*.

function vertically present in all sciences and in all acts of speech.” To appreciate this evental nature of statements, we must attend to “the dimension that *gives* it; ignore its power to designate, to name, to show, to reveal, to be the place of meaning and truth, and, instead, turn [our] attention to the *moment* ... that determines its unique and limited existence.”²²⁶ The enunciative or spacing function of the statement is obscured to the extent that we attend to the propositional or ontic truth of the statement (its correspondences).²²⁷

Discourse, is not therefore to be equated with the particular expressions or propositions of language, but rather with the very articulation of intelligibility. And what is articulated, what is gathered together and given jointure in discourse, is ‘world’. It is this world of political Islam that the genealogist must interrogate. The metacolonial is thus interested in locating those formations of *savoir* (discursive formations) which are complicit in the production of knowledge as *connaissance*. What are the various constellation and gathering of truth-events, the various apparatus (*dispositifs*) that have made these *savoir* historically possible? Foucault once described his archae-genealogy as a practice which would demonstrate

... precisely how, in the course of our history, of our civilization, and in an increasingly accelerated way since the Renaissance, truth-knowledge assumed its present, familiar and observable dimensions; *to show how it colonized and took over the truth-event and ended up exercising a relationship of power over this truth. ... We could call this the genealogy of knowledge, the indispensable historical other side to The Archaeology of Knowledge.*²²⁸

²²⁶ Foucault, *The Archeology of Knowledge & the Discourse of Language*, p. 111.

²²⁷ Rayner it seems would concur with Agamben’s analysis: “Foucault intended his conception of the enunciative function to be understood in relation to the Heideggerian concept of *Ereignis*.” Rayner, *Foucault's Heidegger: Philosophy and Transformative Experience*.

²²⁸ Foucault, *Psychiatric Power: Lectures at the Collège De France, 1973--1974*, emphasis mine.

This “*indispensable historical other side*” in many ways summarizes both the task of the metacolonial and the nature of the transcendental obstacles it will encounter. Foucault middle genealogical phase, his most widely referenced phase, can thus be seen as attempting to historicize the transcendental, without reference to any extraneous metaphysical principles. Nor does his *savoir* look down on empirical history from a supposedly higher philosophical perspective, that of the “eye of the concept”. In some ways as he began to realize in his ethical phase, he cannot have his background and eat it too! Though he would firmly reject the construal of his genealogical histories as metaphysical by pointing to the fact that he grounds his approach in specific analyses of various material traces of discursive practices, he did not shy away from using the term ontology.²²⁹ Yet as Han notes his “interest in empirical discourses is constantly guided by his concern to uncover their underlying quasi-transcendental conditions of possibility”, so as to uncover “that from which knowledge [*connaissance*] and theories have been possible; the space of order on the background of which knowledge [*savoir*] was constituted”²³⁰ It is precisely this which distinguishes Foucault’s genealogy from historicism.

What eventually emerges from Foucault’s work is that History is itself a kind of power or order, an order which makes it possible for us to have the kind of hierarchies we have in the first place. This hierarchy or order, precedes the acquisition of any specific knowledge content (*connaissance*). If Foucault gives a name to this order in his later works, it is biopolitics. The current global violences of the war on terror can be seen as both a reflection of and reaction to this Order of *Gestell* or neoliberalism enframing, an

²²⁹ As we know Heidegger’s ontology, his critique of the tradition of western metaphysics, was not a rejection of metaphysics qua metaphysics.

²³⁰ Foucault, *The Order of Things: An Archaeology of the Human Sciences*, p. xxi–xxii.

inevitability that also often masquerades under the guise of “development”. Foucault’s work therefore opens up a space for thought, that of ‘savoir’, on the background of which all entities can be understood as orderable. For Foucault the History of historicism has become the very framework (the historical a priori) under which entities are today constituted as they are. Foucault argues that “we are governed by History”²³¹ or in my terms, governed by the political, and we will remain so until a new épistème arises. This then leads us back to clarifying the limits of historicism, which is itself a difficult term to define given the various uses of the term.²³² Initially it can be seen as providing a useful correction/critique of the human sciences by showing that the validity of their knowledge is constantly undermined by their inscription within the flow of history. Historicism argues that “none of the contents analysed by the human sciences can remain stable in itself and escape the movement of history”.²³³ That is to say truth is historical, which in historicism becomes “history is truth”. The initial move of historicism is therefore appealing to a postmodern sensibility, since it problematizes the human sciences’ desire for a detached and objective standpoint, by offering the paralyzing insight that this very detachment belongs to the very history they are trying to describe. However, this critical dimension operates at the purely empirical level of what we have identified as *connaissance* (*histoire*). Historicism for Foucault is established ‘solely at the level of positivities: the positive knowledge of man is limited by the historical positivity of the knowing subject, so that the moment of finitude is dissolved in the play of a relativity which we cannot escape and which itself has value as an absolute.’²³⁴ This in historicism

²³¹ Han-Pile, "Is Early Foucault a Historian?."

²³² Paul Hamilton, *Historicism*, New Critical Idiom (London & New York: Routledge, 1996).

²³³ Foucault, *The Order of Things: An Archaeology of the Human Sciences*, p. 370.

²³⁴ *Ibid.*, p. 372.

there is no escaping history, just as much in Nietzsche there is no escaping the will to power.

I take it that the great subaltern Indian historiographer and postcolonial cultural critic, Ranajit Guha, was raising a similar disillusionment within his own discipline of history at the apex of his career²³⁵ Guha, who obviously takes something of a Heidegger turn at the apex of his career (substitute Tagore for Hölderlin), is concerned by the ways in which a deeper, spontaneous and affective relationship of the everyday is betrayed by the forms of “historical” analysis, a neglect of existential temporality by official historiography. Guha is in search of a certain ethical transcendence from the official narratives of history, and turns instead to poetic ways of dwelling to counter the disciplinary apparatus of a colonizing historical narrative. The work here follows then in the wake of this disillusionment with formal history and historiography, without at the same time abandoning historicity. The naïve link between understanding the past as the patient collation of selected fragments of the “historical record”, however de-orientalized in its form and intent, remains part of the very colonial gaze over the life world that Said battled and ultimately himself fell victim to by virtue of his unrepentant humanism. Guha’s turn to *poiēsis*²³⁶ is thus reflective of an alignment with the ethico-poetic moment of Foucault.

²³⁵ Ranajit Guha, *History at the Limit of World-History*, Italian Academy Lectures (New York: Columbia University Press, 2002).

²³⁶ The Greek concept of *poiēsis* suggests productive work, deliberate fabrication, in which the subject employs *technē*, “craft” or “art,” in order to achieve a work. The self, in the context of care of the self, is not the object of knowledge, but rather is itself a work of art; it is poetic.

Sovereign Power and Biopolitics: Foucault and Agamben

Sovereignty

The question of sovereignty has remained one of the most vexing problems of modern political theory. A widespread academic concern with this term has led to a profusion of critical commentaries and investigations, none more remarkable than Agamben's influential work *Homo Sacer*, where he offers the single most powerful theoretical discussion for the problems of modern power. Surprisingly his work has not been taken up by historians, whereas there is now an explosion of interest in his work in fields of law, criminology, international relations, geography, political theory, literary and cultural studies.²³⁷ Building on both Schmitt's theories of sovereign exception and Foucault's analysis of biopower, Agamben argues that "the inclusion of bare life in the political realm constitutes the original-if concealed-nucleus of sovereign power". I will consider Agamben's work in more detail in the following chapters. Suffice it to say that his concept of bare life, sovereign power and the exception has inspired numerous

²³⁷ In this way this dissertation can claim to address a theoretical lacunae in historical studies. Agamben has already entered the pantheon of legendary critical thinkers. The forthcoming book in the Routledge critical thinkers series, places him in the pantheon of such luminaries as Foucault, Derrida, Baudrillard, De Mann, Spivak, De Mann, etc.; see Alex Murray, *Giorgio Agamben*, Routledge Critical Thinkers (Routledge, 2008). Two significant monographs on Agamben have already been published Leland De la Durantaye, *Giorgio Agamben : A Critical Introduction* (Stanford, Calif.: Stanford University Press, 2009), and Catherine Mills, *The Philosophy of Agamben*, Continental European Philosophy (Acumen Publishing Ltd, 2008). A number of edited volumes devoted to the exploration of his work, Matthew Calarco and Steven DeCaroli, eds., *Giorgio Agamben: Sovereignty and Life* (Stanford University Press, 2007), and Justin Clemens and Nicholas Heron Alex Murray, eds., *The Work of Giorgio Agamben* (Edinburgh University Press, 2008). Several journals have issued special editions analysing the impact of his work in their respective fields. See *Law and Critique*, 2009 and Alison Ross, "Introduction," *South Atlantic Quarterly* 107, no. 1 (2008). The journal *Foucault Studies* will be releasing a special issue on Agamben's contribution to Foucault studies. Regretfully the journal *History and Theory* bears few traces of Agamben's influence and a search of the *American Historical Review* brings up a handful of citations almost devoted entirely to book reviews. Oddly enough the outgoing speeches by the President's of the American Historical Association, both mention the significance of Agamben's thematics. See Gabrielle M. Spiegel *The Task of the Historian*, 2009. There are of course a few exceptions see Dominick LaCapra, *History and Its Limits : Human, Animal, Violence* (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 2009).

works,²³⁸ including this one. Agamben's insights into politico-theological structures of modern politics and economics, have become especially relevant with respect to understanding elements of the war on terror with its attendant multiplication of spaces of exception, most paradigmatically Guantanamo Bay.²³⁹

Political theorists, cultural critics, international relations scholars, lawyers, anthropologists, philosophers, and literary critics, all approach the dilemmas of sovereign power with a mixture of urgency and frustration. Social theorist William Rasch in his book *Sovereignty and Its Discontents*,²⁴⁰ and anthropologist Aihwa Ong²⁴¹ each discuss the modern mutations of sovereignty, whereas political scientist Stephen D. Krasner decries sovereignty as a form of "organized hypocrisy."²⁴² Krasner suggests that nobody really seems to know what they mean by the term. According to Krasner, the so-called Westphalian model of sovereignty — according to which sovereign European states were originally mandated to tolerate and recognize each other internationally — is of dubious analytical use: "The most important empirical conclusion of the present study," he writes,

²³⁸ Judith Butler, *Precarious Life: The Power of Mourning and Violence* (London: Verso, 2004), Neal, *Exceptionalism and the War on Terror: The Politics of Liberty and Security after 9/11*, and Dawson and Schueller, eds., *Exceptional State: Contemporary U.S. Culture and the New Imperialism*. Most recently see Bonnie Honig, *Emergency Politics: Paradox, Law, Democracy* (New Jersey: Princeton University Press, 2009).

²³⁹ Bulent Diken, *The Culture of Exception: Sociology Facing the Camp*, International Library of Sociology (Routledge, 2005), A W Neal, "Foucault in Guantanamo: Towards an Archaeology of the Exception," *Security Dialogue* 37, no. 1 (2006), Joshua Comaroff, "Terror and Territory: Guantanamo and the Space of Contradiction," *Public Culture* 19, no. 2 (2007), and N. Hussain, "Beyond Norm and Exception: Guantánamo," *Critical Inquiry* 33, no. 4 (2007). Agamben's paradigm of the camp has also been used to examine modes of exclusion: Sherene H. Razack, *Casting Out: The Eviction of Muslims from Western Law and Politics*, Lorenzo Da Ponte Italian Libra (University of Toronto Press, 2008). Also Michaelsen and Shershow's 2004 essay "The Guantánamo 'Black Hole': The Law of War and the Sovereign Exception." There are a dozen more variations which makes it clear that Agamben's exposure of the political structure of the exception has resonated profoundly in attempts to theorize this exceptional space of suspended law that claims it is still lawful. See also Steven C. Caton, "Coetzee, Agamben, and the Passion of Abu Ghraib," *American Anthropologist* 108, no. 1 (2006).

²⁴⁰ William Rasch, *Sovereignty and Its Discontents* (Other, 2004).

²⁴¹ Aihwa Ong, *Neoliberalism as Exception: Mutations in Citizenship and Sovereignty* (Duke University Press, 2006).

²⁴² Stephen D. Krasner, *Sovereignty: Organized Hypocrisy* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1999).

“is that the principles associated with both Westphalian and international legal sovereignty have always been violated.”²⁴³ In other words, sovereignty names a fiction of state integrity that has never coincided with practice. Hardt and Negri in their influential work, *Empire*, also talk about the transformation of sovereignty under globalization, a situation in which national borders and boundaries are becoming redundant.

Historian James J. Sheehan, dedicating his 2005 Presidential Address to the American Historical Association to “The Problem of Sovereignty in European History,” also points to the mystifications surrounding the concept of the state: “The state was and is not history’s natural *telos*. The emergence of states was neither inevitable nor uniform nor irreversible.”²⁴⁴ He urges therefore that we “move beyond the handful of Western European states whose quite exceptional experience provides both our political vocabulary and our historiographical models.” Many of those readings however, including those that draw on Foucault, are too quick to pronounce the death or irrelevance of sovereign. What is critical however in all of these new explorations is that the principle of sovereignty is simply delinked from the imaginary of the state. This is not to suggest that state sovereign has disappeared — even Hardt and Negri do not make this claim — only that it is undergoing substantial reformation. Foucault’s attempt to extricate us from the fascination with state sovereignty was meant only to redirect our attention to the cunning new modalities through which power in modern societies operates. But even as he developed his analyses of biopower and governmentality as efforts to historicize and denaturalize the “cold monster” of state sovereignty, Foucault acknowledged that “sovereignty is far from being eliminated by the emergence of a new art of government;

²⁴³ ———, *Problematic Sovereignty* (Columbia University Press, 2001), p. 24.

²⁴⁴ Cited in Jonathan Elmer, *On Lingering and Being Last: Race and Sovereignty in the New World* (Fordham University Press, 2008).

on the contrary, the problem of sovereignty is made more acute than ever.” Precisely because our very “political vocabulary” and “historiographical models” are bound up with this conceptually vague notion, it is impossible to evade it altogether.

Following the attack on the World Trade Center in September 2001 however, attacks aimed at what Al-Qaeda saw as the heart of America’s global empire, it seemed as if the essential nature of sovereign power, showed itself with remarkable clarity: as the ability and the will to employ overwhelming violence and to decide on life and death. As Hansen and Stepputat note, “The “war on terror” and the attacks on Afghanistan and Iraq demonstrated that underneath the complex structures of power in modern, liberal societies, territorial sovereignty, and the foundational violence that gave birth to it, still remains the hard kernel of modern states—an intrinsically violent “truth” of the modern nation-state that remains its *raison d’être* in periods of crisis.”²⁴⁵

However what distinguishes Agamben and Foucault, from many of the recent concerns with sovereign, is that they both work to sever the link between state power, sovereignty, and territory, but also to show it up as an ontological problem. In another volume explicitly inspired by the impetus of Foucault and Agamben, a similar distinction between sovereign power and sovereignty is made: “We want to break away from a notion of “sovereignty” as synonymous with “sovereign statehood” that often appears at the center of analysis. Instead we want to insist upon an engagement with the term “sovereign power.””²⁴⁶

²⁴⁵ Thomas Blom Hansen and Finn Stepputat, eds., *Sovereign Bodies: Citizens, Migrants, and States in the Postcolonial World* (Princeton University Press, 2005).

²⁴⁶ Jenny Edkins and Michael J. Shapiro, eds., *Sovereign Lives: Power in Global Politics* (Routledge, 2004).

This is not to say that states no longer exercise sovereign powers, but rather to suggest that the question of sovereign power goes well beyond the framing of sovereignty as a formal, *de jure* property whose efficacy to a large extent is derived from being externally recognized by other states as both sovereign and legitimate. The recent articles collected in the Hansen and Stepputat's edited volume, *Sovereign States*, also seek to "question the obviousness of the state-territory-sovereignty link", and in this way proceed with their interrogations and deployments of the sovereign problematic in the wake of Agamben's insightful analysis. Conceptualizing the territorial state and sovereignty as social constructions, the volume shifts the focus for understanding sovereignty from issues of territory and external recognition by states, toward issues of the internal constitution of sovereign power within state and society; specifically through the exercise of violence over bodies and populations. Sovereign power and violence that always mark it, should therefore be studied as practices dispersed throughout, and across societies.²⁴⁷ "Sovereign power, whether exercised by a state, in the name of the nation, or by a local despotic power or community court, is always a tentative and unstable project whose efficacy and legitimacy depend on repeated *performances* of violence and a 'will to rule.' " In this way we can see how this category is critically useful in our interrogation of 'ulama practices whose sovereign performances, like those of states, are often spectacular and public. As Hansen insightfully notes: "Although the meanings and forms of such performances of sovereignty always are historically specific, they are, however,

²⁴⁷ For a similar analysis of sovereign power as a series of nested fields see Caroline Humphry's entry on Sovereignty in *Companion to the Anthropology of Politics*. See also Jens Bartelson, *A Genealogy of Sovereignty*, Cambridge Studies in International Relations (Cambridge University Press, 2001). and Cynthia Weber's incisive study of sovereignty as produced through acts of international intervention; Cynthia Weber, *Simulating Sovereignty: Intervention, the State and Symbolic Exchange*, Cambridge Studies in International Relations (Cambridge University Press, 1994).

always constructing their public authority through a capacity for visiting violence on human bodies.” The spectacular violence visited on Afghanistan and Iraq, and the rise of practices of torture and bodily humiliation of the enemy, can be seen as a particular reflection of the assertion of sovereign power.

Biopower

As we can see then, biopolitics, sovereignty and governmentality hence form a complex interrelated matrix. In preliminary terms Foucault’s account of the emergence of “modern biopower” can be characterized historically as the passage from the “territorial state” to the “state of population”. In its traditional form, which is that of territorial sovereignty, power defines itself essentially as the right over life and death. It concerns life only indirectly and negatively. Foucault characterizes sovereignty through the formula “to make die and to let live.” Foucault defines the difference between modern biopower and the sovereign power of the old territorial State through the crossing and transition of two symmetrical formulae. 1) To make die and to let live summarizes the procedure of old sovereign power, which exerts itself above all as the right to kill. 2) To make live and to let die is, by contrast, the insignia and modality of biopower, which has as its primary objective to make the care of life and the biological as such into the primary concern of State power. Biopolitics on the contrary, seeks to indicate the order of a politics generally determined by life and devoted to its maintenance and control. What is meant by biopolitics, in principle, is not “a politics about life or living” but, rather “the sphere of politics coextensive with the sphere of life.”

During the seventeenth century with the birth of the modern state, and the emergence of “population”, care for the life and death of subjects begins to occupy an increasing place in the mechanisms and calculations of states. Sovereign power is thus progressively transformed into what Foucault calls “biopower.” The ancient right to kill and to let live gives way to an inverse model, modern biopolitics, which can be expressed by the formula “to make live and to let die”. In contrast then to modern biopower “in the right of sovereignty, death was the point in which the sovereign’s absolute power shone most clearly” (Foucault). Sovereignty then was for Foucault that historically specific form of power associated with monarchical power, that involved the right to kill or let live. The individual or institution that exercises the ultimate and legitimate right to kill can claim sovereign power. Sovereign power includes the right to punish (spectacular forms of torture), discipline (confinement, prison) and extract (tax) and expel (ban). It is a deductive power. However for Foucault’s sovereign power did not simply disappear but was transformed. Modern states now exercise both sovereign and biopolitical forms of power. When Foucault famously declared that what we need “is a political philosophy that isn’t erected around the problem of sovereignty. ... We need to cut off the King’s head: in political theory that has still to be done”, what he was referring to was the way in which a top down *model* of power, residing in a monarch or the state (the juridico-political model) continues to inform modern conceptions of power. The actual modality of sovereign power, in particular its right to kill, is subsumed as the dark underside of modern biopower, what Foucault referred to as thanatopolitical element of biopower

Therefore one needs to distinguish in Foucault between several elements of sovereignty; one represented by the historical institution of the monarch, one represented

by the juridico-political model of power (as a model of top down power), and the other as the bodily modality of any sovereign power (whether monarchical or biopolitical) which retains a certain power over life, as in Weber's famous definition of the state as possessing the monopoly on violence. Foucault's biopower by contrast is collective power of a *bios*, the sovereign power of the people in contrast to the sovereign power of the individual monarch. Sovereign power is thus diffused within the body politic, and concentrated in specific legal forms within the institution of the modern state. Biopower is modern, biopolitics is originary. The former requires population, biopower is a biopolitics of the population. Foucault claimed that state sovereignty in the modern period retains the power of death but has been subject to reformulation so that "the ancient right to take life or let live was replaced by a power to foster life or disallow it to the point of death."

Thus even though the formal elements of sovereign power have been replaced by biopower, the darker thanato-political elements of sovereign power remain potentially buried within the underbelly of biopolitics. In Hitler's National Socialist regime the exercise of biopower and sovereign power overlapped to create an absolutely murderous and absolutely racist state. In fact Foucault would go on to argue that race was the element which allowed biopower to exercise its dark sovereign side.

At its most elementary then biopolitics refers to a power over species life and the body. In its shortest and most general formulation we can say that biopolitics is a politicization of life and simultaneously a politics of the body, a calculated politics of life, that targets the individual and collective species body. The manner in which power operates upon both individual bodies and populations in modern Western societies has

therefore undergone a dramatic shift. Modern powers function in a manner that go far beyond traditional models of sovereignty or of state power, and hence demand a concrete and historically specific analysis of their operations. Biopower and biopolitics thus designate the specifically modern mechanisms of power over life in relation to both the individual and the population. Biopolitics refers to the growing inclusion of man's natural life in the mechanisms and calculations of power. This term allows us to consider the way in which power confronts life. It invites us to consider the fundamental relationship between life and power, between life and the political.

Foucault most explicitly describes biopower in the section on "Right of Death and Power over Life" in *The History of Sexuality: Will to Knowledge*, and is worth quoting in full

"this power over life [biopower] evolved in two basic forms; these forms were not antithetical, however; they constituted rather two poles of development linked together by a whole intermediary cluster of relations. One of these poles — the first to be formed, it seems — centered on the body as a machine; its disciplining, the optimization of its capabilities, the extortion of its forces, the parallel increase of its usefulness and its docility, its integration into systems of efficient and economic controls, all this was ensured by the procedures of power that characterized the disciplines: an anatomo- politics of the human body. The second, formed somewhat later, focused on the species body, the body imbued with the mechanics of life and serving as the basis of the biological processes: propagation, births and mortality, the level of health, life expectancy and longevity, with all the conditions that can cause these to vary. Their supervision was effected through an entire series of interventions and regulatory controls: a biopolitics of the population. The disciplines of the body and the regulations of the population constituted the two poles around which the organization of power over life was deployed."²⁴⁸

Foucault thus identified two related dimensions of modern power — a disciplinary power: exercised upon the bodies of individuals through techniques of

²⁴⁸ Foucault, *The History of Sexuality: An Introduction*, p. 139.

training, surveillance, spatial distribution, examination, and normalization (prisons, schools, factories, clinics, hospitals etc.), and biopower: a regulatory mechanism exercised upon the biological existence of a population grasped as an object of management, administration, and control. Impelled by the exigencies of governing modern life, biopower refers to knowledge and strategies of power that aim at governing a population's life forces. Governmentality and biopower are therefore intimately connected. Further on Foucault states that the "disciplines of the body and the regulation of the population constituted the two poles around which the organization of power was deployed" seeking to "invest life through and through."²⁴⁹

Rather than suppress, constrain, or destroy, power now operates to "incite, reinforce, control, monitor, optimize, and organize the forces under it." (Foucault) Biopower takes as its object the population rather than just the individual body. That is to say biopower is concerned with the human being as a biological species subject to conditions such as births and mortality, health, illness, and disease, life expectancy and longevity, risk and security, management and control. Biopower, is in short, a power of regularization designed to optimize the socio- biological capacities of a living multiplicity of human beings. Under biopower regimes everything including human beings, but especially the natural environment, are viewed as entities lacking intrinsic meaning other than as resources for relentless optimization, efficiency and calculation.

Biopolitical governmentality can therefore refer to institutions beyond the state (media experts, hospitals, clergy, etc) and it can encompass a strategic rationality for the management of population, understood as a vital resource, any rationality that takes life

²⁴⁹ Ibid.

as its target of operations. Through the deployment of various normalizing technologies of power, biopolitical government seeks to organize population so as to maximize its value as resource. This is in fact the key ingredient of neoliberalism, which Foucault examines in his lectures on biopolitics. What is critical here is that Foucault argues that modernity is dominated by a (technological, techno-biopolitical) power that works to objectify the real and reduce human life to the level of resource Heidegger calls this power machination (*Machenschaft*) or enframing (*Gestell*). This power works to order the forces of life, placing them into productive systems, and this is what Foucault calls biopower.²⁵⁰ Rayner notes that Foucault, like Heidegger, associates modernity with “a power that objectifies and orders the forces of human life for the sake of power.” The task of thinking today, is to overcome sovereign and biopolitical ways of thinking, to escape the disciplinary power-knowledge nexus.

Foucault also showed that modern political rationality is biopolitical. Rather than operating according to the rationality of sovereignty in which power is represented in the image of the sword—the power to form a law and to enforce it, the right to kill those who transgress—biopower is represented in the image of a healthy population. Politics aims at the management of a population—it is the power to foster life. Biopolitics sustains the development of institutions which structure our lives and the world according to the ends of biological life—that is, toward economy in the Greek sense of the word *oikonomia*, the management of necessary, organic functions, needs, and pleasures. Life is defined in economic and biological terms rather than in ethical and political terms. All other projects are submitted to the ultimate goal of continuing and perfecting life in the biopolitical

²⁵⁰ Biopolitics, Foucault reminds us, was central to the development of capital.

sense of the term, and the means of doing this become more and more technologically sophisticated. In the pursuit of a secure, healthy, and productive population, biopolitics deploys disciplinary, normalizing institutions. Biopolitical survival and normalization come to be mutually reinforcing

While Foucault has probably done the most to bring the concept of biopolitics into contemporary social theory, it is Agamben who has further analyzed its most disturbing material inscriptions. For Foucault, biopolitics arises when life itself becomes the object of structures of power. In his analysis, this change occurs with the rise of modernity in eighteenth-century Western Europe, and he exemplifies it through contrasting on the one hand, the public execution of regicides before the beginning of the era, and the panopticon prison model on the other, whose spatial arrangements allow for the control of prisoners through permanent surveillance. Importantly, this surveillance is only made possible by the emergence of a new discourse concerning the relationship between life and power. Foucault's analysis implies the view that the subjection of life to power is itself a central element of modernity. Giorgio Agamben's analysis of modernity's dark underbelly would seem to suggest otherwise.²⁵¹ Agamben traces the roots of the modern state and its forms of biopolitics back to the beginnings of the Western tradition that shaped the modern world order. States from the time of the Greeks down to the early twenty-first century are by definition sovereign states, and the essence of sovereignty, Agamben argues, lies in the power to decide who is and is not a member of the political community; a power whose paradigmatic institutional expression is the

²⁵¹ Agamben, *Homo Sacer: Sovereign Power and Bare Life*.; see also Norris in Andrew Norris, ed., *Politics, Metaphysics, and Death: Essays on Giorgio Agamben's Homo Sacer* (Durham: Duke University Press, 2005).

state. Those that are simultaneously internal to the community, and yet excluded from it, are reduced to the status of “bare life.”

For Agamben the state of exception, which at once excludes bare life and in doing so simultaneously captures it within its political order, is the “hidden foundation” on which the structure of the modern relation between politics and life rests, a structure in which life presents itself as what is included by means of an exclusion. In a similar fashion the metacolonial thesis seeks to unveil the way in which Islamist politics also constitutes itself in relation to the production bare life. The structure of the exception, the inclusive exclusion of *zoē* in the *polis*, will be shown to also be coincident with Islamist politics. Crucially then it is across this link between bare life and politics, “a link that secretly governs the modern ideologies seemingly most distant from one another”, that the indistinction between Islam and the West can be found. Our metacolonial thesis pertaining to the violences of Islamism, and Pakistani political space more generally, relies similarly on the notion that Islamic actors are embedded in a wider space and history of metaphysics, of which they remains entirely unaware. Furthermore I will claim that it is the engine of biopolitical sovereignty that is secretly operating behind all forms of modern thinking, including as I will show modern Islamist thinking (from Iqbal to Mullah Omar).

Foucault's Grammars of Power

One could correctly argue with both Enns and Oksala,²⁵² that Foucault was ultimately a philosopher of freedom, although not in the liberal sense of the word. Foucault's entire trajectory I believe was concerned with exposing the capture of life (freedom) by power. He sought to provide tools by which the governed can understand the rationality that informs the way they are governed and thereby better resist intolerable forms of governance. The most important term in his work, biopower, designates this sense of power over life. His critique of liberalism,²⁵³ would effectively show how certain ideas that disavow their own investments in a certain form of life, and a certain implicit order, are effectively concealing the relationships of power upon which they stand. Hence the remarkable aporias of liberal regimes and their propensity for global violence.²⁵⁴ Reid's recent book *The Biopolitics of the War on Terrorism* is important for this study. He seeks to examine the question of the pervasiveness of war in liberal societies. Like Browns work on tolerance, he shows how liberalism should be understood as a specific regime of truth which disallows certain forms of life in favor of what he calls logistical life (effectively the life of homo economicus). The function of ideology is of course to give a kind of symbolic consistency to power, to legitimize and naturalize it, and to conceal its structural incoherence and disparity. Definitive of liberalism has been its belief in the ability to establish peaceful societies through the removal of the condition of war. Democratic Liberal regimes claim that they have devised the best political means

²⁵² Oksala, *Foucault on Freedom*, and Diane Enns, *Speaking of Freedom: Philosophy, Politics, and the Struggle for Liberation* (Stanford University Press, 2007).

²⁵³ Wendy Brown, *Regulating Aversion: Tolerance in the Age of Identity and Empire* (Princeton University Press, 2006).

²⁵⁴ Dillon, *The Liberal Way of War: The Martial Face of Global Biopolitics*, and Reid, *The Biopolitics of the War on Terror: Life Struggles, Liberal Modernity and the Defence of Logistical Societies*.

that allow human beings to flourish peacefully. From their inception in the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries liberal regimes have sought to govern life with a view to the elimination of the problem of war from within and between societies. However if liberal modernity has been shaped most powerfully by the ideal of peace, it has nevertheless also been defined not only by the recurrence of war, but by a gradual increase in military capacities among liberal societies for the violent destruction of human life. Why, Reid asks, has the liberal political project based concretely on the ideal of peace in the service of humanity, continually served to reinvent and bolster its nemesis, war ? Why is it that a political project dedicated to solving the problem of war and the creation of peace has now culminated in the declaration of a war bereft of temporal or spatial parameters? Why is it that a political project which seeks to sever the relation of society to war now requires a social state of permanent mobilization for war? By committing to a war without end, temporally, spatially, or politically, the form that the “War on Terror” is taking is unprecedented in its breadth and intensity, and a war no longer simply confined by the dialectics of Washington. While Reid shows us much about the biopolitical modality of the war on terror, what is often left out in this and the other spate of recent works which deploy the biopolitical framework, is a sense of the Muslim subject as yet again a mute recipient of a series of Western logics. By contrast in this work I wish to show how the logic of power traverses Muslim subjectivity itself.

Foucault’s account of power of course famously rejects the problematic of ideology, in particular its true/false binary.²⁵⁵ For Foucault the Marxist approach presupposes an essentialist concept of the subject whose ‘real interests’ are supposedly

²⁵⁵ Foucault, *The Politics of Truth*. For an useful discussion of Foucault’s conception of truth in contrast to Marx’s conception of ideology see Michele Barrett, *The Politics of Truth: From Marx to Foucault* (Cambridge: Polity Press, 1991).

distorted by the operations of ideology. However, the problem with this ‘metanarrative’ of ideology, according to Foucault, is that the subject who is to be liberated from power, “the man described for us, whom we are invited to free, is already in himself the effect of a subjection much more profound than himself.”²⁵⁶ The critique of ideology then, though useful is limited in its conception of how power operates.

Foucault’s neologisms can be seen then as a great proliferation of grammars of power designed to expose the operations and modalities of power in both micrological (subjective) and macrological (institutional) settings. It was a question for Foucault, of articulating these grammars into new and mobile configurations, configurations whose task was not to denote but to disclose the open, the worlding of the world. His grammars were directed therefore not so much towards the truth about a specific object or historical phenomenon (though of course he offers a critique of the production of object domains) but at thought itself; the very activity of thinking and the *process* of the production of knowledge, whether of the philosopher, the diplomat, the clinician or the scholar.

Therefore his power concepts — discipline, sovereignty, governmentality and biopolitics — were not designed to denote rigid methodological borders, but were rather site/space specific, but otherwise loose grammars for the disclosure of the subject entangled in power relations, in *dispositifs* of power. For instance, while Foucault’s discussion of sovereign power was a site/space specific description of a juridico-discursive form of power, the notion of biopolitics did not simply replace sovereign power, but rather the general modality of sovereign power (the “right to *take* life or *let*

²⁵⁶ Foucault.

live”²⁵⁷) combined with other emerging *dispositifs*—discipline, police and population—and folded together to form a new configuration of biopower (the “power to *foster* life or *disallow* it”). Genealogy is thus a practice of the arts of disclosure, a disclosure of the space of power. Foucault’s complex and shifting grammars of power, can then be taken as modes of disclosure, designed to elicit a transformation of self/understanding. Ultimately Foucault’s genealogy with its armory of power-*grammar*’s is an attempt to reach the thought of the ‘outside,’ it suggests a path of transformation, a movement to think otherwise.

The precise relationship between Foucault’s grammars is often a subject of much controversy and disputation with the broad social science uptake of his work, which divides itself roughly between three camps; those who would prefer to emphasize Foucault’s critique of neoliberalism (governmentality scholars),²⁵⁸ those concerned with the various modalities of discipline inherent in modern social practices (scholars of the disciplines and subjectivity),²⁵⁹ and those who have developed his notion of

²⁵⁷ Foucault, *The History of Sexuality: An Introduction*, p. 138.

²⁵⁸ For instance Gordon, Burchell, and Miller, eds., *The Foucault Effect: Studies in Governmentality*, Andrew Barry, Thomas Osborne, and Nikolas Rose, eds., *Foucault and Political Reason: Liberalism, Neo-Liberalism and Rationalities of Government* (London: UCL Press, 1996), Nikolas Rose, *Powers of Freedom: Reframing Political Thought* (Cambridge & New York: Cambridge University Press, 1999), ———, *The Politics of Life Itself: Biomedicine, Power, and Subjectivity in the Twenty-First Century*, Information (Princeton University Press, 2006), Nikolas Rose and Peter Miller, *Governing the Present: Administering Economic, Social and Personal Life* (Polity, 2008), Paul Rabinow and Nikolas Rose, eds., *The Essential Foucault: Selections from Essential Works of Foucault, 1954-1984* (New York: The New Press, 2003), Mitchell Dean, *Governmentality: Power and Rule in Modern Society* (London & Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage Publications, 1999). Also see the introduction in Rabinow and Rose, eds., *The Essential Foucault: Selections from Essential Works of Foucault, 1954-1984*. Recent works that deploy a governmentality framework include Ilana Feldman, *Governing Gaza: Bureaucracy, Authority, and the Work of Rule, 1917 and 1967* (Duke University Press, 2008), Tania Murray Li, *The Will to Improve: Governmentality, Development, and the Practice of Politics* (Duke University Press, 2007).. Governmentality has also been influential in studies of education. See also A.C. Beasley Michael A. Peters, Mark Olssen, *Governmentality Studies in Education*, Contexts of Education (Boston: Sense Publishers, 2009).

²⁵⁹ John S. Ransom, *Foucault's Discipline: The Politics of Subjectivity* (Durham: Duke University Press, 1997), Ian Hunter, *Rethinking the School: Subjectivity, Bureaucracy, Criticism*, Questions in Cultural

biopolitics,²⁶⁰ which has taken on a new albeit perhaps conflicting trajectory in works of Hardt and Negri²⁶¹ and those concerned with biopolitics. The early distinction between these three arenas is however gradually disappearing, and in Agamben, who favors the language of the biopolitical, the two forms collapse. It is really only with Agamben's reading of Foucault's project as a political ontology, that the critical resonances between each of these grammars can be saved from deteriorating into a quibble over Foucaultian philology.²⁶²

With the question of power more broadly Foucault seems to be moving in two different albeit inter-related directions; on the one hand opening up a more general space for understanding power in its intensification and dis-positioning of the subject, while also at the same time offering more specific vocabularies for describing new formations and grids of power relationships (*dispositifs*). Without this framework of political ontology (what I have examined above in terms of the background), some of Foucault's moves seem whimsical and one is tempted to suggest as Colin Gordon, Paul Patton, Thomas Lemke and numerous other commentators do, that Foucault simply abandons biopower in favor of a more specific conception of governmentality,²⁶³ or worse still with

Studies (St. Martin's Press, 1994), Cressida J. Heyes, *Self-Transformations: Foucault, Ethics, and Normalized Bodies*, Studies in Feminist Philosophy (Oxford University Press, 2007).

²⁶⁰ Dauphinee and Masters, eds., *The Logics of Biopower and the War on Terror: Living, Dying, Surviving*, Dillon, *The Liberal Way of War: The Martial Face of Global Biopolitics*, Michael Dillon and Andrew Neal, eds., *Foucault on Politics, Security and War* (Palgrave Macmillan, 2008), Stephen Morton and Stephen Bygrave, eds., *Foucault in an Age of Terror: Essays on Biopolitics and the Defence of Society* (Palgrave Macmillan, 2008), Reid, *The Biopolitics of the War on Terror: Life Struggles, Liberal Modernity and the Defence of Logistical Societies*, and Eugene Thacker, *The Global Genome: Biotechnology, Politics, and Culture*, Leonardo Books (The MIT Press, 2005).

²⁶¹ Hardt and Negri, *Empire*, and also Roberto Esposito, *Bios: Biopolitics and Philosophy*, Posthumanities (University of Minnesota Press, 2008).

²⁶² Rose and Rabinow, *Thoughts on the Concept of Biopower Today*

²⁶³ For instance the surprising remark: "Given how much has been written about it, it may come as a surprise to many to learn that the concept of biopower does not play a major role in Foucault's work." Paul Patton, "Agamben and Foucault on Biopower and Biopolitics," in *Giorgio Agamben: Sovereignty and Life*, ed. Matthew Calarco and Steven DeCaroli (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 2007).

Louis McNay, Nancy Fraser, Charles Taylor, Eric Paras and Alain Badiou, that Foucault embraces a modified conception of liberal subjectivity in his ethical turn.

Foucault's shifting vocabularies thus should be thought in terms of a hermeneutic circle, a movement of thought that edges towards its unsayable goal of an experience of the thought of the outside. Hence the moves from archaeology to genealogy, from genealogy to problematizations, and from problematizations to eventalization, do not so much mark a change of target or a tacit repudiation of earlier styles and the limits of a particular method. Instead they mark a certain restlessness, a shifting and refinement of language whose continuous aim is the discovery of a more proximate form for expressing the relationship between history and historicity. Nor is it simply a matter of producing verifiable or logical propositions regarding power. Instead for Foucault, philosophical activity is "the critical work that thought brings to bear on itself? In what does it consist, if not in the endeavor to know how and to what extent it might be possible to think differently, instead of legitimating what is already known?" He adopts as his form for this critical activity the essay; "The "essay" —which should be understood as the assay or test by which, in the game of truth, one undergoes changes, and not as the simplistic appropriation of others for the purpose of communication —is the living substance of philosophy, at least if we assume that philosophy is still what it was in times past, i.e., an "askesis," *askesis*, an exercise of oneself in the activity of thought."²⁶⁴

What then, pace Agamben, does one make of Foucault's famous call for "liberation from the theoretical privilege of sovereignty". It is important to note here that Foucault's call is opposed to a *model* or *representation* of power, and not the essential

²⁶⁴ Foucault, *The History of Sexuality: An Introduction*, p. 9.

modality of sovereign power. It is only “the representation of power [that] has remained under the spell of monarchy. In political thought and analysis, we still have not cut off the head of the king.”²⁶⁵ Foucault’s exhortation here is thus to see the more stealthy and intimate operations of power which have arisen with greater intensity since the advent of modern biopower, and not simply see power as residing in the state or the dominant class. When viewed in light of a metaphysical struggle for the soul, the history of being/power, power takes on an entirely new garb. If anything sovereign power is itself a certain apparatus, an older *avatar of power* if you will. Sovereign power however does not simply disappear, only its institutional form does. When Foucault critiques the juridical model of power, what he is suggesting is not that sovereign power vanishes rather that it mutates and is displaced, while at the same time the monarchical *conception* of power retains its hold on the imagination. As such the new form of power can pervade the system without being exposed as such. Liberalism primary weakness lies precisely in its inability to see power as situated in the interstices of the social body.²⁶⁶ On Foucault’s account then, in the European sphere, sovereign power’s inefficient *modus operandi* is gradually supplanted by a more efficient *modus operandi*, i.e. biopower “the administration of bodies and the calculated management of life.” European forms of sovereign power however continue to operate in the margins of Europe and more overtly in the colonial territories. At the same time modality or element of sovereign power understood as the “power of life and death” —the exceptional element of sovereign power— was of course conscripted and folded within the framework of biopower, principally in the guise of racism, thus forming the dark thanatopolitical underbelly of

²⁶⁵ Ibid., p. 88 - 89.

²⁶⁶ For an elaboration of this critique see Brown, *Regulating Aversion: Tolerance in the Age of Identity and Empire*.

biopolitics that Foucault details in his 1975-1976 lectures “*Society Must be Defended*.” It is always a question in Foucault of tracing the mutations and disseminations of power, establishing the specific cartographies of power in the places and times under analysis, while simultaneously seeing these configurations as a general expression of the intensification of power over life, the historical movement of *Gestell*. Thus for example in the colonies—a space of Western power which Foucault famously ignores²⁶⁷—the various forms of local and indigenous sovereignties, co-mingled with the new forms of colonial sovereign power, to be challenged and themselves transplanted by the newly emerging forms of counter racial biopolitical nationalisms. The task of a metacolonial historian would be to map these new always overlapping and intersecting spaces of power, and to expose even the various historico-political discourses of resistance (i.e. Marxism, postcolonialism) that claim to oppose structures of domination, as a continued function of the ruse of power.

Thinking Political Islam Genealogically

In a preliminary way then we can see that if socio-political phenomenon like political Islam are approached only in terms of a *connaissance* knowledge (ontic/present), then the existential *savoir* dimension of knowledge (ontological/absent) dimensions will be obfuscated. Foucault’s theory of the enunciative function of statements (*énoncés*), inserts itself precisely at this point, as a concern not with the specifics of what is said, but

²⁶⁷ See for instance Stoler, *Race and the Education of Desire: Foucault's History of Sexuality and the Colonial Order of Things*.

with the structuring of intelligibility and signification itself ;²⁶⁸ “not with reference to the interiority of an intention, a thought, or a subject, but in accordance with the dispersion of an *exteriority*.”²⁶⁹ This exteriority is none other than the background. Hence we can see that an exclusive concern with ‘ulama knowledge (‘*ilm*) as *connaissance* would yield a study that is markedly different from one which seeks to discover the exteriority or *savoir*. Another way of saying this then is that it is not “Islam” in the configuration “political Islam” that is key, but rather the political. Any attempt to reclaim an originary ethical space of Islam, must today pass through the very political medium in which all discourse on Islam are discursively articulated. My claim will be that the major studies of the ‘ulama thus far do not fully engage the political, in large part because they take the form of the political for granted. That is to say they do not theorize the matrix of power within which both ‘ulama and scholarly writings on Islam are situated.

It should be clear that this is not simply a study of the ‘ulama caught up in networks of power (as if the ‘ulama were somehow originally outside of power) but rather a study of the very ways in which the ‘ulama are both constituted by and themselves constitute a form of power. ‘Ulama practice and discourse cannot thus be studied in isolation from the immanent ways in which political space is constitutive of subjectivities. Thus by shedding light on the complex nature of political space we are simultaneously shedding light on ‘ulama discourse and practice. The later cannot be understood in isolation from this space. It is in this sense a archae-genealogy of political Islam. My use of Foucault’s genealogy conforms to my understanding of his endeavor as a history of the present, which departs from the often superficial deployments of

²⁶⁸ With the worlding of the world.

²⁶⁹ Foucault, *The Archeology of Knowledge & the Discourse of Language*, p. 125.

genealogy as a mere history of (empirical) discontinuities. Rather Foucault sought to use discontinuities as breakdown moments that consequently shone greater light on the shifts in the episteme, a series of ruptures that would in fact reveal the dissemination and intensification of power through history.

Despite important differences between Foucault and Agamben — these critical figures converge at the intersection of biopolitical sovereignty. Foucault's genealogical grammars of power (biopolitics and governmentality/security) and Agamben's sovereignty²⁷⁰ (the state/space of exception), all share a broad characteristic which can be subsumed under the general trajectory of 'power over the singularity of life'. For instance, Foucault's genealogy of subject formation outlined the ways in which life is conscripted and captured within the calculus of 'normalizing' governmental rationalities. Key to the normalizing operations of modernities biopolitical apparatus was the development of security mechanisms "installed around the random element inherent in a population of living beings so as to optimize a state of life."²⁷¹ Foucault's governmentality is thus essentially a security apparatus (*dispositif de sécurité*) which triangulates the political somatics of disciplinary power and older modalities of sovereignty with the new biopolitical technologies that target and secure populations. In the expanding order of this biopolitical space (the modern *polis*²⁷²) — a space which is at

²⁷⁰ Antonio Negri, one of Agamben's foremost critical interlocutors, in his review of *State of Exception*, suggests that Agamben's foremost contribution to the analysis of sovereignty has been to moor it within the terrain of political ontology. See also A. Negri, "Philosophy of Law against Sovereignty: New Excesses, Old Fragmentations," *Law and Critique* 19, no. 3 (2008).

²⁷¹ Foucault, *Society Must Be Defended*, p. 248.

²⁷² "*Polis* is usually translated as city or city-state. This does not capture the full meaning. *Polis* means, rather, the place, the there, wherein and as which historical being-there is. The *polis* is the historical place, the there *in* which, out of which, and for which history happens" Martin Heidegger, *An Introduction to Metaphysics*, trans. Ralph Manheim (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1987), 152. The *polis* does not designate geometrical or Cartesian space, but primarily names the place or the site in which Dasein (human being) comes to dwell in a historical-ontological manner. In this paper I will generally use *polis* (and bio-

once homogenizing, normalizing and technological — the production of new martial subjectivities closes off and obscures the possibilities of life understood as a singularity. Agamben's formulation of bare life, the camp and the state of exception, radically ontologizes Foucauldian biopolitics, a point which is encapsulated in Agamben's primary thesis in *Homo Sacer*: "The entry of *zoē* into the sphere of the *polis* — the politicization of bare life as such — constitutes the decisive event of modernity." For Agamben, this event, this capture and inclusion of bare life in the political, "constitutes the original — if concealed — nucleus of sovereign power. It can even be said that *the production of a biopolitical body is the original activity of sovereign power.*"²⁷³ For Agamben, politics today has been entirely transformed into biopolitics. As such the task of the metacolonial analysis as it is deployed in this work, is to think the problematic of political Islam *genealogically* and, by extension, *biopolitically*.²⁷⁴

With Agamben the term biopolitical sovereign simply captures Foucault's understanding of the way in which sovereign power folds into the biopolitical. The sovereign is no longer the king but it is society itself.²⁷⁵ That is to say sovereignty is now folded within the biopolitical, and the *people* (species race) are the new kings. In resistance to forms of colonial sovereignty which after 1857 increasingly took on the tone of a British biopolitical form of sovereignty, the process of biopoliticization was amplified. Hence biopoliticization is a certain 'politicization of life', a term which for both Agamben and Foucault, signals the capture of life (its singularity, its mystery, its

polis) to signal the space of the modern political, the *polis* of police and policy, the *polis* of Islamapolis, as the name for the space where the question of being is no longer a question. I elaborate on this use in Chapter 2.

²⁷³ Agamben, *Homo Sacer: Sovereign Power and Bare Life*.

²⁷⁴ I would regard the biopolitical as one of the disclosive vectors of critical ontology.

²⁷⁵ Foucault, *Society Must Be Defended*.

finitude, its aleatory nature) by a certain kind of power, a power that pervades the modern *polis*. This power should not be understood as either a material or discursive structure, nor even an ideological configuration, but rather as an ontological vector. It is around this phrase, the politicization of life, that the points of convergence between Agamben and Foucault and Heidegger's political ontology need to be highlighted, especially since the provisional aim of the metacolonial is to disclose the biopoliticization of Islam. And certainly political Islam, as we shall see exemplified in Deoband political practice, has failed to recognize the nature of this "foundational event", this 'radical' (i.e. ontological) transformation, having already equated modernity with the surface of Western culture as such. *Political Islam's ontic dissonance with the West thus belies a deep underbelly of ontological equivalences and resonances.*²⁷⁶

²⁷⁶ On Heidegger's account, "modern techno-power is founded in an unconditional drive toward the enhancement of power. This drive toward enhancement calls for the *objectification* and ordering of beings; conversely, the objectification and ordering of beings facilitates the drive towards enhancement." (Rayner) In this way if we regard Foucault's 'history of power' as in part a narrative of the intensification of power, we can see how it is indebted to the process that Heidegger calls technological enframing. Governmentality then can be thought of as the way technological subjects seek to accomplish security, certainty and stability 'through a complete ordering of all beings, in the sense of a systematic securing of stockpiles, by means of which [their] establishment in the stability of certainty is to be completed' (Heidegger, *Nietzsche: Volumes One and Two*, p. 234. quoted in Rayner). The individualizing and totalizing poles of biopower in Foucault, coincide in the 'total mobilization' of beings as resource, the systematic securing of stockpiles for the sake of power. The result is that nature, now distinct from human 'culture', comes to appear as a vast field of usability and disposability or 'standing reserve' (*Bestand*) (———, *The Question Concerning Technology*, p. 17.) It is in this sense that 'culture' is itself a form of colonization. In his Parmenides lectures, Heidegger emphasises the links between the etymological roots of culture, with colonization. of the originary life-world possibilities of human being. Human life itself becomes a resource, or domain for maximization and securitization. This transformation of man, and subsequently the domain of culture itself, into production and stockpile, is the unfolding of what Heidegger calls the will-to-power. Effectively then power for Heidegger names "that kind of willing that wills itself as will to power." Agamben's critique of life under biopower is precisely a critique of this double affirmation of the subjects exalted and sovereign existence. 'The basic form of appearance in which the will-to-will arranges and calculates itself in the unhistorical element of the world of completed metaphysics can be stringently called 'technology'. Humanism, the target of Heidegger's critique in the *Letter*, is thus a diminution of human potentiality, which under technology becomes the purest expression of the will-to-will and its sacralization of life. *Technē* operates by facilitating the increasingly total predominance of the actual over the possible, beings over being, the *totality over the singularity*. Techno-power can be seen as a certain kind of *relationing* (or conditioning) in which subjectivity asserts itself as will-to-will. This will-to-will is what Agamben will identify as the arché of sovereign power (*potere*) in opposition to potentiality (*potenza*). Thus humanism, which is at the heart of the "anthropological machine", with its attendant political doctrines of liberalism and democracy and its

Thus to be clear then, biopolitics or ‘power over life’, does not simply mean the conscription of an originally free subject within an external structure of domination and subordination. It is not simply that the subject is enmeshed within institutional arrangements of disciplinary power, nor that its subjection to forms of overt sovereign power or repression wholly define it. Though one element of power (which Foucault designates as power with a capital “P”) certainly does involve domination and overt violence²⁷⁷, the form that Foucault is primarily interested in is the productive subject-forming power. Power is thus not external to the subject but immanent with it. We may say that the modern subject is itself the expression of a constellation of historical and ongoing forces; the subject is a form of power through and through. And it is the normalized and disciplined subject of a biopolitical identity that is most powerful expression of subjectivity today, a form that I would argue pervades the dominant conceptions of Muslim identity. In fact Foucault would claim that the discursive regime of historico-political discourses are the most powerful and effective forms of subject formation/bondage. For it is precisely when the subject sees itself in a war of liberation against repressive forces, that this very struggle binds it more concretely to the identity/subject/people it wishes to liberate. We might call this *the biopolitical trap of the wretched*. Thus historico-political discourses and movements of resistance against overt power can end up producing a more effective double capture of subjectivity. For instance in *The Order of Things*, Foucault shows how what seem to be opposing and discontinuous positions, really belonged to a same archaeological or epistemic ground. Something of a similar strategy is deployed by Agamben when he talks about the

juridical armature of a rights bearing subject, are complicit in technologies occlusion of its own impoverished metaphysical *episteme*.

²⁷⁷ See Appendix on Power

limitations of democracy, human rights, Marxism and liberalism which all remain oblivious of their metaphysical soil. Our metacolonial thesis pertaining to the violences of Islamism, and Pakistani political space more generally, relies similarly on the notion that Islamic actors are embedded in a wider space and history of metaphysics, of which they remains entirely unaware. The “enigmas” of modern violence, be it the Nazi or the American war machine, al-Qaeda, Taliban or the IRA, can only be solved, then,

on the terrain – biopolitics – on which they were formed. Only within a biopolitical horizon will it be possible to decide whether the categories whose opposition founded modern politics (right/left, private/public, absolutism/democracy, etc.) – and which have been steadily dissolving, to the point of entering today into a real zone of indistinction – will have to be abandoned And only a reflection that, taking up Foucault’s and Benjamin’s suggestion, thematically interrogates the link between bare life and politics, *a link that secretly governs the modern ideologies seemingly most distant from one another*, will be able to bring the political out of its concealment and, at the same time, return thought to its practical calling.²⁷⁸

The aim of an archaeology of any discourse, scientific or Islamic, is thus not to analyze discourse as propositions, but rather to identify these *governing* rules (rules of governmentality) within a field of power relationships; the historical *a priori*, in their historical manifestation. The metacolonial is thus a cartography — a *topology of power* — and here I seek to work out a regional Deoband diagram; the complex topology of power in which the practices and possibilities of the Pakistani ‘ulama are situated. What necessarily complicates this analysis is that we are considering the Deoband who both articulate a certain governmentality and are simultaneously situated within multiple and overlapping spaces and senses of power. Forswearing what Said called ‘imaginative geographies’, is merely the point of departure for the metacolonial. It is this space of

²⁷⁸ Agamben, *Homo Sacer: Sovereign Power and Bare Life*.

intelligibility that I am calling the metacolonial, and I will subsequently interpret political Islam as itself a subject of the metacolonial; that is to say its specific violence's can be understood by, and be seen as productive of, the metacolonial. The remaining chapters shall themselves disclose instances of the play of this metacolonial state/space. To be sure this is not the unfolding of some abstract philosophical zone, nor is this an exercise in first philosophy, but rather this work aims at the disclosure of a concrete, somatic, and violent space — the unfolding of the will to power and nihilism at the heart of *all* political appropriations of Islam; modernist, liberal, traditional and orthodox alike. In our designation, the phenomenon of the Taliban—the politics, ideologies, religions and violences that gather in and around its name—is not an exception to mainstream political Islam, but an exemplary instance of the modern-metacolonial.

Shari'a law for instance, manifests itself precisely as a power over life and the body and can in this sense be read effectively as a biopolitical technology of (sovereign) power. The provisional aim of this work, will be to show the way in which 'ulama practices disclose, or reveal, a political space that is best characterized as metacolonial. I will argue that Political Islam has from its very inception been a metacolonial rather than a strictly postcolonial phenomenon. The task of the dissertation is thus two fold, to lay the groundwork for thinking the metacolonial, and showing how political Islam in general and the political practice of the Deoband ulama in particular, exemplify this claim. What follows then is an attempt to undertake a historical and political cartography of the Deoband *anthropos*.²⁷⁹ This endeavor neither privileges nor displaces what might

²⁷⁹ In a summary fashion, it could be said that the radical failure of the Deoband lies in its endeavor to preserve an *ethnos* rather than an *ethos*.

have been a more standard chronological, historiographical or ethnographical transcription of original research data.

Also, to be clear, lest the earlier invocation of Nietzschean ‘Will’ mislead us from the start, this account of the Deoband is not a subjectivist one. Nor is not concerned principally with the humanist question of agency and freedom (although I do not mean to disregard this either), but with the conscription, production and entanglement of subjectivities within the modern. So it is not so much that we can think of Deoband politics, whether in Pakistan or Afghanistan, as actively pursuing a conscious strategy of sovereignty, nursing secret ambitions of acquiring State power through a duplicitous recourse and mobilization of some tailor made interpretation, or authentic revival of Islam as such. Rather it is a question of disclosing the ways in which modern political space, the *polis* itself — in which the Deoband respond and participate — produces ‘ulama politics. It is this political space of power that I am calling the metacolonial, and it is in this space that the ‘ulama, indeed all political agents, dwell. What I seek to demonstrate then is not the way in which the ‘ulama may be said to be in pursuit of power or sovereignty, but rather the way in which the Deoband is itself haunted, terrorized, by sovereignty—how they are possessed (rather than obsessed) by power.

Chapter III

The Space of Emergency: Political Theology & The Military

[The] tradition of the oppressed teaches us that the 'state of exception' in which we live is the rule. We must attain to a concept of history that accords with this fact. Then we will clearly see that it is our task to bring about the real state of exception, and this will improve our position in the struggle against fascism.

(Walter Benjamin)

Indeed, the state of exception has today reached its maximum worldwide deployment. The normative aspect of law can thus be obliterated and contradicted with impunity by a governmental violence that—while ignoring international law externally and producing a permanent state of exception internally—nevertheless still claims to be applying the law.

(Agamben)

Disciplinary Space

In *Discipline and Punish* Foucault suggests that a fundamental transformation in the epistemic regime of penal justice was in part caused by the infiltration of an apparatus of power that had emerged in military camps. The origins of modern 'disciplinary' power thus lie not in the prison but the *space of military camps* and the battlefield. The disciplinary dressage of early modern military camps, the culture of perpetual observation and examination, the emergence of spaces of confinement, and the recourse to repetitive training exercises, were all corporeal forces that were designed to construct a more efficient fighting human machine. Such techniques eventually spread, mutated and

penetrated other institution like the hospital, school (madrasa) and factory. The disciplinary manipulation of bodies does not produce subjects per se, but is only one part of a complex network of power/knowledge, or 'apparatus', which forms the constitutive conditions of subjectivity. Modernity, Foucault suggests, inaugurates the disciplining of the soul through the corrections of the body. The new madrasa at Deoband, which according to Metcalf is the "leading theological academy of modern India", is described as at once traditional and modern. Metcalf is uncomfortable, and rightly so, with the common understandings of the madrasa as 'traditional.' This was a school that "clearly broke with earlier patterns of education"²⁸⁰ and which "from its inception was unlike earlier madrasas. The founders emulated the British bureaucratic style for educational institutions instead of the informal familial pattern of schools then prevalent in India. ... Financially, the school was wholly dependent on public contributions, mostly in the form of annual pledges, not on fixed holdings of *auqaf*, pious endowments contributed by noble patrons."²⁸¹ In her concern to critique modernization theories²⁸² Metcalf misses here an opportunity to see this transformation of the madrasa as inaugurating the emergence of a modern disciplinary space of power within the very heart of orthodoxy. 1857 clearly marks the formal end, or decapitation of Muslim sovereignty in British India, and thus sets the stage for the turn towards biopolitical forms of power. The emergence of the modern madrasa therefore, replete with new forms of enclosure,

²⁸⁰ Introduction in Metcalf, *Islamic Contestations: Essays on Muslims in India and Pakistan*.

²⁸¹ ———, "The Madrasa at Deoband: A Model for Religious Education in Modern India."

²⁸² Modernization theories have, in part due to the early efforts of scholars like Metcalf, fallen into disrepute. Such theories were examples of egregious eurocentrism that aimed to continue the civilizing mission by other means. Modernization theorists argue that the proper script for modernity and progress has already been written in the West and so all that traditional societies have to do is emulate this script. However modernization theory continues today in the guise of development. For an excellent critique see Joel Wainwright, *Decolonizing Development: Colonial Power and the Maya*, Antipode Book Series (Wiley-Blackwell, 2007).

regulation and surveillance of bodies, represents the penetration of modern forms of power, both disciplinary and biopolitical, into the heart of a movement which ostensibly trumpets its anti-Western anti-colonial credentials. Metcalf's assertion then that "the school's concerns were totally apolitical"²⁸³ is untenable not only because it ignores the overt political nature of the Deoband since 1918, but because it relies on a flawed and weak conception of politics/power that is rooted precisely in the kind of juridico-political and state model that Foucault has so severely critiqued. The material reliance therefore of the madrasa on 'popular' rather than 'sovereign' power most clearly signals this shift into the modern. We must view the Deoband then, its institutions and its practices, within the framework of a more robust and conceptually rich conception of power, a model of power which at minimum has cut off the king's head.

It is thus fitting that we begin our account of the metacolonial space of Pakistan by a consideration of the fundamental role that 'discipline' has played in facilitating the now innumerable and proliferating spaces of violence in Pakistan. That the military has played a dominant role in shaping the political destiny of Pakistan is commonly acknowledged. But little or no attention has been placed on interrogating the nature of and form of military power, or the state form itself. The military has to be sure been endlessly described²⁸⁴ but it remains remarkably under theorized. Overall I will be highlighting the necessity of recognizing an indistinction between military space and 'ulama space. Both inaugurate and proliferate disciplinary and biopolitical spaces. It is their recent overlap and merger that has resulted in the crossing of a certain threshold, leading to the emergence of new and unexpected *dispositifs* and assemblage of power.

²⁸³ Metcalf, "The Madrasa at Deoband: A Model for Religious Education in Modern India."

²⁸⁴ See below for a consideration of the relevant literature.

Today's civil war is not only a contest between jihadism and its erstwhile parent the military, nor is it only a contest between various sectarian traditions. It is also an increasingly violent civil war within the Deoband establishment itself. Pakistan's guiding principles — enunciated by the Father of the Nation M.A. Jinnah in an early radio address to the new nation — “Faith, Unity, Discipline”,²⁸⁵ must thus be seen in a whole new and disturbing light.

Pakistan's history has long remained under the shadow of dictatorship. But as Agamben clarifies, dictatorship and the state of exception are not the same thing. The former is only a species of the latter. Thus while plenty of attention has been paid to the explaining the causes for Pakistan's seemingly endless cycle of dictatorship,²⁸⁶ no one has yet paid attention the relationship between the sovereign exception and dictatorship. The proclamations of emergency that are considered in this chapter can then be applied to our understanding of the *fatwa* as a force of law. The military as a force of war thus can be said to merge with the 'ulama's space of law (*Allah awr Army*). A threshold is reached when the distinction between law and war collapses. It is thus necessary to trace the ways in which the Pakistan military has contributed to the state of exception through its repeated interventions in and domination of political space.

The metacolonial designates the space of power we inhabit today. I have characterized metacolonial space as a biopolitical sovereign space of exception. This chapter will seek to understand and expose the contours of this space. In the chapters thus far I have suggested that in order to understand political Islam in Pakistan we need to take

²⁸⁵ These words are famously inscribed on the *Teen Talwar* (Three Swords) monument located at a prominent intersection/roundabout in Clifton, Karachi. It seems as if the disciplinary sword has triumphed over the other two; unity and faith. Both Islam (faith) and Pakistan (unity) lie in obvious ruin.

²⁸⁶ See for instance Jalal, *Democracy and Authoritarianism in South Asia*.

into account the nature of political space. The political and politics are of course terms of classical provenance, linked to the Greek term *polis*, which though conventionally translated as city-state,²⁸⁷ designates a space of power. The political as such, is also associated more concretely with the emergence of *popular* movements and *populations*.²⁸⁸ There is thus something already biopolitical in our everyday usage of the term “political.”

Thus to reiterate, in this dissertation I am concerned with understanding the emergence of the political itself, rather than the emergence of political Islam as such. This space of the political is signaled by the broader transformations that Foucault identifies as the transition from sovereign (monarchical) power to forms of modern biopolitics and governmentality. As should be evident then from any cursory understanding of Foucault’s use of the term, power is not a thing or substance, it is not owned or possessed, but rather circulates. It is a term that designates relationships of power which take place at the level of populations and the individual and not just at the level of the state.²⁸⁹ Political Islam, can be said to be political in so far as it embodies a mentality of power — a governmentality — that seeks to shape, conduct, control, discipline, protect and or liberate (Islamize) society. It does not have to refer to activities that aim at the control of the formal state apparatus, or that take place at the level of

²⁸⁷ “*Polis* is usually translated as city or city-state. This does not capture the full meaning. *Polis* means, rather, the place, the there, wherein and as which historical being-there is. The *polis* is the historical place, the there *in* which, out of which, and for which history happens” Heidegger, *An Introduction to Metaphysics*, 152. The *polis* does not designate geometrical or Cartesian space, but primarily names the place, site or abode, in which Dasein (human being) comes to dwell. I will generally use *polis* (and bio-*polis*) to signal the bio-political space of the modern: the *polis* of police and policy, the *polis* of Islamapolis.

²⁸⁸ It is perhaps for this reason that we do not generally identify say the Abbasid revolution as a manifestation of political Islam, and the term seems to be almost wholly absent from studies of Islamic Empires, and “premodern” Muslim societies. Political Islam, and Islamism, acquire their full place in the hierarchy of Western political epistemology only after the Iranian revolution, with modest gestures to the Muslim brotherhood, and perhaps Jamal al-din al-Afghani, as the progenitors of Islamism as such.

²⁸⁹ See the appendix entry on power and chapter 2 for further clarifications of this otherwise broad and enigmatic term.

formal political parties that contest national elections. Similarly as I have discussed, Agamben's conception of sovereign power does not refer exclusively to the orbit of state power.²⁹⁰

In Chapter 2 I outlined the inadequacies of approaches to political Islam that privilege 'religion' as either a universal category or as an independent agent of historical formation. Consequently my research seeks to highlight the "secular"²⁹¹ processes and forces (state actors, global political economy, etc.) that bear on the formation of Islamist politics and subjectivities.²⁹² Therefore before we begin to discuss 'ulama technologies of power, it will be vital to consider the broader nature of Pakistan's disciplinary and martial space. If as I claim Pakistani political space is being increasingly defined by the state of exception, then 'ulama biopolitics, must itself be situated within a broader understanding of the state/space of sovereignty. In Pakistan this space has been dominated by and produced as a military space. In short we must first turn to the way in which the Pakistan Army has infected the broader political space by its own martial disciplinary logics, logics which have served to intensify and multiply the space of exception.

It is not simply the case however that the army or the military are somehow the originators or cause of the state of exception. Like colonialism, the army has simply sustained and intensified the logic of exception. This means that it is the structure of the

²⁹⁰ It is precisely for this reason that Nasser Hussain's use of the term "emergency" to characterize colonial juridical apparatus, is flawed. Nasser Hussain, *The Jurisprudence of Emergency: Colonialism and the Rule of Law*, Law, Meaning, and Violence (Ann Arbor: University of Michigan Press, 2003). Not only does he fail to take into account the politico-theological (ontological) nature of sovereign power, he is concerned largely with the way in which colonial legal structures hampered the development of national sovereignty. Thus while his study sheds excellent new light on the structure of colonial formations, his uptake of Agamben is of limited use in our study. Like Agamben I view sovereignty as the source of the political problem and not a goal to be achieved.

²⁹¹ For Carl Schmidt these 'secular' processes are already politico-theological processes.

²⁹² In this way my project merely attempts to instantiate lines of inquiry that have been sustained elsewhere more eloquently and forcefully. See Asad, *Genealogies of Religion: Discipline and Reasons of Power in Christianity and Islam*, ———, *Formations of the Secular: Christianity, Islam, Modernity*.

sovereign exception, the ban, and not simply the material logics and history of the military that need to be exposed.²⁹³ At the same time I am not suggesting that some hidden metaphysics or deep a-historical structures are solely to account for the crisis in Pakistan. On the contrary it is first and foremost the militarization of the *polis* by that institution of colonial governmentality par excellence, the Army, that lies at the heart of the political crisis facing Pakistan. Thus the state of exception is not unique or particular to either the military or the ‘ulama. Additionally both military and ‘ulama governmentality thrive in a broader space of power which is itself further sustained by the routine (normal) exercise of sovereign power by imperial and colonial forces. The ruling trinity of Pakistan, *Allah, Army awr Amrika* (the AAA)²⁹⁴ is thus first and foremost an expression of a sovereign anxiety. Any attempt to solve the predicament of violence and instability in Pakistan must therefore seek to think the problem on the horizon of the incoherence’s of sovereignty. What hampers most studies that seek to account for the crisis of Pakistan is the repeated failure to problematize the political, sovereignty, religion, identity and the very biopolitical logic of the nation-state.²⁹⁵ In short it is power and not Pakistan as such which requires thinking. Pakistan is merely the effect of power.²⁹⁶ Hence we must begin our analysis by making clear that the productive link

²⁹³ We can get a sense of the importance of this structure by noting how, despite the passage from military dictatorship and martial law to democracy, Pakistan remains in an exceptional state. As if often disturbingly apparent to the citizenry of Pakistan, the distinction between regimes of martial law and regimes of democracy are increasingly entering a zone of indistinction.

²⁹⁴ To the commonly asked question, who rules Pakistan, a popular adage often invokes the AAA; the trinity of God, Army and America, that are allegedly responsible for the fate of the country. The terms suggest that the power of the Army and America are not unlike the power of God; mysterious and wholly unaccountable to the people.

²⁹⁵ That is to say an Asadian or broadly Foucaultian understanding of the political has not been applied to the study of Pakistan.

²⁹⁶ In her attempt to “make sense” of Pakistan, noted scholar of history and International affairs, Farzana Shaikh, similarly fails to take into account the very structural incoherence of the very terms she deploys in her explanation. There is a mention of, but no serious problematization of power. However the book does break ground by pointing to the incoherence of Pakistani identity itself as lying at the heart of the crisis:

between Islamist violence and the army is not merely a question of uncovering a dark history of alliance and short sighted deployments, but is rather a question of understanding the intensification, and permanent localization of the state of emergency.

Pakistan and Her Army

There is by now a long and faithful tradition of critique within Pakistani scholarship, that highlights the particularly nefarious role played by the Army in the creation of Pakistan's seemingly endless series of social, economic and political crisis. Veteran activist and journalist Tariq Ali has been predicting the immanent collapse of Pakistan since 1969. His highly influential *Can Pakistan Survive?* was so good it was banned by General Zia-ul Haq.²⁹⁷ His latest book, *The Duel*, characterizes the dialectic of Pakistan's tragedy as the "ongoing duel between a U.S.-backed politico-military elite and the citizens of the country."²⁹⁸ The last three decades, Ali writes, "have witnessed a shallow and fading state gradually being reduced to the level of a stagnant and treacherous swamp."²⁹⁹ Ali was however self-exile in 1963, and was thus spared the wrath of the military establishment. More sustained and less polemical analysis of the

"the vexed relationship between Islam and nationalism". For instance she insists that "Pakistan" rejected theocracy at its foundations. But one is left with the distinct feeling from her narrative, that some agent called "Pakistan" has simply failed to juggle its pluralist balls adeptly. By contrast we view both balls (identity) and the activity of juggling (nationhood) as problematic to begin with. For an otherwise useful and comprehensive account of Pakistan's 'ideological' morass see Shaikh, *Making Sense of Pakistan*.

²⁹⁷ As a young teenager, while in High School in Pakistan, I was able to obtain a bootleg copy. It was perhaps one of the first political texts that influenced my desire to study history and politics. It should be republished however under the new title "Canned, Pakistan Survives!"

²⁹⁸ Ali, *The Duel: Pakistan on the Flight Path of American Power*.

²⁹⁹ Ibid., p. 1.

praetorian state began to emerge in the 1980's,³⁰⁰ including a sound volume edited by a former commander-in-chief of the Pakistan Air Force (1957 – 1965) Air Marshal Asghar Khan.³⁰¹ In a series of more recent works greater flesh has been put on the ways in which the army has not only co-opted the political process and but also simultaneously extended its power within the fabric of culture and economy.³⁰² In each of these works the deadly network of alliances between the 'ulama, the military and the United-States is explored. Each essay outlines the way in which alliance between these three forces was contributing to the retardation of democratic potential. Each essay predicted the potentially catastrophic results that would ensure from these alliances. It seems as if no one in the Pakistani establishment had time to read. In each of these essays the 'ulama are written of as anti-modern and illiterate forces that have been opposed to the integrity of Pakistan from the very beginning. Since then a certain dominant, and by no means incorrect, thematic has come to characterize almost all explanations of Pakistan's problems; the nefarious role played by the United State in consistently supporting both military rule and jihadist forces in the 1980's.³⁰³ This structural alliance is then set on top

³⁰⁰ Hassan Nawaz Gardezi and Jamil Rashid, *Pakistan, the Roots of Dictatorship : The Political Economy of a Praetorian State* (London: Zed Press, 1983).

³⁰¹ Mohammad Asgar Khan, ed., *Islam, Politics and the State: The Pakistan Experience*, Third World Books (London: Zed Books, 1985). One of the contributors, journalist Zafaryab Ahmed was arrested by the Zia regime and tortured.

³⁰² For the classic account of the military capture of the economy see Jalal, *The State of Martial Rule: The Origins of Pakistan's Political Economy of Defence*. More recently in an excellent study Ayesha Siddiqi shows how the army has penetrated both economy and society in a more sustained and intense manner such that their extraction from power will be difficult even when the façade of democracy returns. See Ayesha Siddiqi, *Military Inc.: Inside Pakistan's Military Economy* (Pluto Press, 2007). Siddiqi's analysis runs parallel with but more deeply than Mazhar Aziz who also seeks to outline a greater explanatory role for the military in understanding the political failure of the state. Both studies extend the metaphor of failure or frustrated process of nation-building. Once again I seek to examine the assumption that "development" and "nation building" are desirable to begin with. Mazhar Aziz, *Military Control in Pakistan: The Parallel State*, Routledge Advances in South Asian Studies (Routledge, 2009).

³⁰³ This is effectively the primary tenor of the argument in two recent works. See Ahmed Rashid, *Descent into Chaos: The United States and the Failure of Nation Building in Pakistan, Afghanistan, and Central Asia* (Viking Adult, 2008), Ali, *The Duel: Pakistan on the Flight Path of American Power*, Hussain, *Frontline Pakistan: The Struggle with Militant Islam*.

of an already existing network of postcolonial woes that have beset the nation from its violent and bloody inception; a feudal hierarchy, poverty and political corruption. All in all, so the argument goes, these forces, the AAA, have compromised if not destroyed the ‘secular’ potential and originary vision of ‘true’ Pakistan and ‘true’ Islam. Each of these recent works, Shaikh, ‘Ali and Rashid in particular, offer us a compelling narrative and endless description of a series of cynical alliances and ideological hypocrisies. In many ways I share the analysis of these leftist and liberal authors. But what emerges is a detailed historical and political *description* of the movement of actor-puppets with little attempt to understand the nature of ‘movement’ and the principle of motion itself. Each are limited either by the explanatory framework which even in the liberal narrative (Rashid) invariably draws from a Marxist paradigm (the contradictions of capital, imperial greed, corruption and mismanagement by the ruling elite, ‘false consciousness.’) And consistently the ‘ulama are viewed simply as anti-modern forces whose resurrection has been facilitated by the cynical “weaponization” of Islam by the Army and America alike. The chickens are now coming home to roost, lets fire the farm managers for letting them get out of the pen! Again while I share the underlying tenor of these arguments, something is missing. It is this something, this unthought that I seek to get at in the remaining chapters.

In this work then I am arguing that Islamist violence is made possible and sustained by a more autonomous will to power among the ‘ulama class, and is not merely a corollary of the inscription of the ‘ulama within military spaces. At the same time however the violence of the ‘ulama cannot be understood in isolation from its conscription within and proximity to geopolitical violence of the army and America.

Additionally we might add that the martial spaces extended by the military, which are determinative of the ethos of the political space in which all other political actors participate, cannot in any meaningful sense be decoupled from the ongoing “martial face” of a variety of neoliberal and neoconservative global governmentalities.³⁰⁴ This is the secondary neo-colonial sense of the meta-colonial where *meta* implies being in the midst of, rather than post. This ongoing meta-colonial space is markedly different for India than it is for Pakistan. This is not to say that the former is devoid of such meta-colonial forces, only that they differ in intensity. In India in contrast to Pakistan, a sovereign anxiety and dislocation is not for the most part in a state of perpetual crisis. Pakistan’s destiny therefore lies in its complex entanglement within a series of both interconnected but also conflicting historical and political *dispositifs*; from its postcolonial legacy, the dominance of the military, the place of Pakistan within the imperial orbit of the United States, to the very violent biopolitical caesura which carved out this “moth eaten” nation. What I am referring to here is of course the very *eidos* of Pakistan and the capture of Islam within its political schema. Pakistan emerges under the biopolitical imperative of “society must be defended.”³⁰⁵ In a similar way American foreign policy, rightly regarded as deterring democracy, is the outcome of its own will to security. We do not then have merely cynical players who are promoting a political vision for direct material gain, but rather a series of actors that are each concerned with defending and securing their populations, their ummah.

As the premier colonial institution the Army has always conflated its own *raison d’être*, the defense of the territorial nation-state (Pakistan) with the defense of Islam.

³⁰⁴ Dillon, *The Liberal Way of War: The Martial Face of Global Biopolitics*.

³⁰⁵ Foucault, *Society Must Be Defended*.

Similarly the Deoband ‘ulama have always regarded their political activity, from the founding of the originary school in 1857, to their support for the Taliban today, as the safeguarding and preservation of Islam. During the tenure of Zia-ul Haq, this indistinction reached its maximum intensity as Pakistanis were increasingly disciplined by a new form of Martial Islam. Certainly in the minds of such figures like Hamid Gul, the former head of Inter-Services Intelligence (1987-89), who Ahmed Rashid rightly called “the most fervent Islamic ideologue in the army after Zia”³⁰⁶ the defense of Islam took priority over Pakistan. It would not be unfair to suggest that today Pakistan is being haunted by Hamid’s *ghouls*.

Today there is no shortage of works that make the decisive connection between the rise of violent religious extremism in South Asia and troubling role of the Army in the proliferation of *jihadism*. It is critical to note therefore that the transformational threshold in the rise of ‘ulama governmentality was inaugurated by a series of overlapping geopolitical and nationalist, not Islamist, forces. This alliance is on the one hand a confirmation of Mitchell’s *McJihad* thesis, which highlights the indistinction between McWorld and Jihad.³⁰⁷ Mitchell seeks in part to erase the lines of absolute difference characterizing “our history” and “theirs”, by not only expanding the scope of “the they” but also showing how “us and them” are historically interpolated, and how a common space of power is forged by the political economy of oil. Mitchell is effectively

³⁰⁶ Rashid, *Taliban: Islam, Oil and the Great Game in Central Asia*, p. 129. As Rashid notes Gul played a lead role in both the establishment of the Taliban after the Soviet-Afghan War, and for redirecting the Afghan jihad towards the insurgency in Jammu and Kashmir against India. During his tenure General Gul was also instrumental in forging the right-wing conservative coalition the *Islami Jamhoori Ittehad* (Islamic Democratic! Alliance) against the left-leaning liberal Pakistan Peoples Party (Hassan Abbass, *Pakistan’s Drift into Extremism: Allah, the Army, and America’s War on Terror* (Armonk, NY: M.E. Sharpe, 2004), p 123.

³⁰⁷ Mitchell’s essay is in part a response to these ostensible opposites in Benjamin Barber’s quasi-Orientalist tirade Benjamin R. Barber, *Jihad Vs Mcworld*, 1st ed. (New York: Times Books, 1995). which effectively regurgitates the essentialist Islam/West binary under the cover of pop sociology

suggesting that the question of political Islam be analytically framed within a field of power relationship, which are increasingly transnational and neoliberal. That is to say rather than culture being understood merely as an autonomous and essential feature of society,³⁰⁸ it needs to be placed more concretely within the context not only of local power struggles, but also trans-national power grids of neoliberal Empire.³⁰⁹ Mitchell goes on to remark:

As a rule, the most secular regimes in the Middle East have been those most independent of the United States. The more closely a government is allied with Washington, the more Islamic its politics...When other governments moved closer to the United States—Egypt under Anwar Sadat in the 1970s, Pakistan under Zia ul-Haq in the 1980's—their political rhetoric and modes of legitimation became avowedly more Islamic. ... This pattern, once it has been noticed, lends itself to a straightforward, but unsatisfactory, explanation. The United States depends on the support of conservative political regimes, it is often pointed out, and these have tended to rely on religion to justify their power. ... This explanation is unsatisfactory because the conservative political morality offered by certain forms of Islam is not some enduring feature of the religion that rulers adopt at their own convenience. Its usefulness reflects the fact that religious conservatism expresses the views of powerful social and political movements. Political regimes enter into uneasy alliances with these movements, depending on *a force they do not directly control*.³¹⁰

³⁰⁸ For a critique of the “culturalist” assumptions about Muslim society see Mamdani Mahmood, *Good Muslim, Bad Muslim: America, the Cold War, and the Roots of Terror* (New York: Pantheon Books, 2004).

³⁰⁹ Whereas colonialism refers to “foreign presence in, possession of, and domination over bounded, local places” (Said), imperialism refers to foreign domination, without the necessity of presence or possession, over expansive, transnational spaces. Colonialism formally refers to the occupation of territory by foreign settlers, soldiers, or administrators. Imperialism, by contrast, is the projection of political power across large spaces, over other target states. No assumption of property need ground the imperial relationship. What makes for an imperial relationship, one that characterizes the US/Pak relationship, is the influence and the potentiality to project power, rather than manifest as an actual presence. Imperialism is thus a kind of global hegemony without formal annexations and colonies. Thus the frame for understanding the relationships of power between the US and many Muslim nations, is imperial: what geographer Derek Gregory call a “colonial present.” In Hardt and Negri however, Empire constitutes a new formation which exceeds the imperial sovereignty of the United States. For Pakistan however the two forms of power, Empire and Imperialism, cannot be neatly disaggregated. See the essays in Craig Calhoun and Frederick Cooper, eds., *Lessons of Empire: Imperial Histories and American Power* (New Press, 2006).

³¹⁰ Mitchell, “Mejihad: Islam in the U.S. Global Order.”

While certainly correct, Mitchell does not elaborate on the nature of this force? Is he suggesting that conservative Islam is a distinct force from global capital? If so he would be undermining his own *McJihad* thesis. By highlighting a series of interlinked dependencies between the maintenance of power and the authority of states like Egypt and Saudi Arabia, Islamist forces and U.S. strategic and economic interests, Mitchell states that because religious movements have played this pivotal part in the global political economy “it would seem to follow that political Islam plays an unacknowledged role in the making of global capitalism.” Hence his formulation of our age as McJihad:

an age in which the mechanisms of capitalism appear to operate, in certain critical instances, only by adopting the social force and moral authority of conservative Islamic movements. ... the crisis in Afghanistan reflects the weaknesses of a form of empire, and of powers of capital, that can exist only by drawing on social forces that *embody other energies*, methods, and goals.³¹¹

McJihad then describes a deficiency of capitalism, a deficiency that produces a history of incoherence's. Towards the end of the essay he makes clear that *McJihad* “does not refer to a contradiction between the logic of capitalism and the *other forces* and ideas it encounters” but rather, “to the absence of such a logic”. However by suggesting that the political violence in the region is the “persistent symptom of this lack” it would seem as if, Mitchell unwittingly confirms the deep distinction between the forces of global capitalism (modernity) and “other forces and energies” (jihad). By contrast in this work I would like to suggest a more fundamental indistinction between capitalist violence (Empire) and Islamist violence (Jihad). The plane of this indistinction is biopolitical, and it reaches a more fundamental union in the ISI-jihad alliance, represented by figures like

³¹¹ Ibid, emphasis mine

Gul. Therefore the distinction between state-military violence and Islamist violence is already severely blurred in Pakistan.³¹²

By now of course the thesis that the United States helped forge the conditions of possibility for the rise of jihadist extremism is well known even to an American audience.³¹³ Cole leaves no room for doubt about this long and sordid history of liaisons and while as I maintain the 1979 war does constitute a threshold in the transformation of political Islam, the essential link between the military and political violence has a longer provenance. Without taking into account the long history of the Pakistan Armies will to sovereignty the nature of this violence will be reduced to a series of ‘tactical’ mistakes and shortsighted policies. At minimum a focus on radical Islam or even ethnicity as the root cause of the crisis simply masks the more fundamentally repressive role of the state — its legitimization of the use of violence as the means for political participation and negotiation; and in particular, the role of the military, which from the very outset of Pakistan's history, has attempted to control the political process and gear the state towards maintaining what Ayesha Jalal aptly calls a “political economy of defense.”³¹⁴ But even this formulation does not go far enough and as I shall argue in this and preceding chapters, the turn towards radicalism by the ‘ulama is not causally linked to state practices, but rather emerges from the incoherence and nihilism of a biopolitical

³¹² For a useful descriptive account of the role of the Pakistani state in the emergence of militancy in Pakistan and in Afghanistan see Rizwan Hussain, *Pakistan and the Emergence of Islamic Militancy in Afghanistan* (Aldershot, UK & Burlington, VT: Ashgate Publishing, 2005), and Zahab and Roy, *Islamist Networks: The Afghan-Pakistan Connection*.

³¹³ See John K. Cooley, *Unholy Wars: Afghanistan, America and International Terrorism*, New ed. (London: Pluto Press, 2000). For a popular account see Robert Dreyfuss, *Devil's Game: How the United States Helped Unleash Fundamentalist Islam*, American Empire Project (New York: Metropolitan Books, 2005), Robert Baer, *Sleeping with the Devil: How Washington Sold Its Soul for Saudi Crude* (Crown Publishers, 2003), and Steve Coll, *Ghost Wars: The Secret History of the CIA, Afghanistan, and Bin Laden, from the Soviet Invasion to September 10, 2001* (New York: Penguin Books, 2004).

³¹⁴ Jalal, *The State of Martial Rule: The Origins of Pakistan's Political Economy of Defence*.

process of which both the state and Islam are mutual interlocutors. It is when these forces meet that particularly violent thresholds are crossed. The event of Pakistan itself constituting the first merger.

One may also note that while the violence of this decade, in particular the emergence of suicide bombing as a weapon of insurgency, has taken on a new affective intensity, decades previous have been witness to similar levels of military-civilian violence. There is already a long history of the brutalization of Baluchistan that has yet to be fully documented. The 1990's conflict between the MQM and the State, was also written in terms of mutilated bodies in gunny bags. Interestingly enough, today's operations against the Pakistani Taliban reflect on a large scale a pattern of civil military relationships that has characterized the repeated deployment of paramilitary groups for domestic and foreign agendas of the Pakistan Army. As is well known, the MQM was also nurtured by Zia as a force to counter the democratic forces of the PPP,³¹⁵ a decade which also claimed hundreds of lives in sectarian and ethnic violence.

The conflict between the MQM and the Pakistani state dates back to 1992's "Operation Clean-up", a government initiated military operation, ostensibly aimed at cracking down on all "terrorist" and "criminal" elements in Sind, but which effectively became a witch hunt against the MQM. The MQM's charismatic albeit autocratic leader, Altaf Hussain, was forced into exile, and the party which had dominated Karachi politics since its founding in 1984 was forced underground. May and June of 1994 were marked not only by the rise of the Taliban in Afghanistan, but also a period of violent resistance by a militant wing of the MQM. As one monster was veering out of control, another was

³¹⁵ Oskar Verkaaik, *Migrants and Militants: Fun and Urban Violence in Pakistan*, Princeton Studies in Muslim Politics (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2004).

being manufactured. In May 1995 the conflict took its most bloody turn with MQM militants systematically ambushing police patrols. Using rocket launchers, they attacked a number of government offices and police stations, and during the months that followed Karachi came to a virtual halt as the MQM and paramilitary forces battled it out on the city's streets; a glimpse of what was to come in Swat and Waziristan a decade later. While sporadic ethnic and sectarian violence had been a permanent feature of the Karachi landscape since 1992, the intensity and organized nature of the 1995 round of conflict was entirely different. Analysts began to compare the situation in Karachi to the insurrection in Kashmir as the death toll during the months of June and July peaked at over 600 people, marking only the beginning of months of carnage that were to follow. A new set of sensationalistic evening dailies cropped up in Karachi — front pages adorned with pictures of bloodied, bullet-ridden, or severely tortured bodies. The state's swift and brutal retaliation ensuring these tabloids ample material for their daily commodification of death.

Thus while it is important to document the links between various Islamist groups and the military, a more fundamental account of political space is lacking. Most analysis thus far therefore take the state or the military as their point of departure. Each of these works fundamentally conforms to a model of juridico-political power that Foucault rejected, an understanding that continues to hamper even those scholars who draw on Agamben's theory of sovereign power, yet insist on sovereignty as an exclusive feature of the state. I obviously do not wish deny the role of the state (or colonialism for that matter) but the question of power and sovereignty as posed by Foucault and Agamben transcends the originary logic of state power. Thus it will be necessary to consider the

state of exception. As I will show, even in the absence of formal martial law, the exception prevails³¹⁶ The indistinction of political space between the departure of Musharraf and the return of democracy highlights this fact. This perhaps was one of the most tragic outcomes of what was otherwise a proud moment in the struggle between the people and the martial state.³¹⁷

Producing Emergency: The Frequencies of Violence

What we need, however, is a political philosophy that isn't erected around the problem of sovereignty. ... We need to cut off the King's head: in political theory that has still to be done. (Foucault, "Truth and Power", 1977)

The question of the *place* of political Islam in Pakistan, and the Deoband and the Taliban in particular, cannot be fully understood without taking into account the link between martial spaces, the political, and of course the postcolonial context of the Pakistan Army. The army emerges historically as the key institution of colonial policing, securing colonial sovereignty over British India, and as such its originary conscription, its *raison d'être*, lies firmly within colonial governmentality. Subsequently since 1947, or more accurately 1956, it has been 'martialled' as the effective local proxy for American foreign policy, and would simply collapse without the periodic infusions of money, aid and technology from the United States.³¹⁸ An understanding of the military and in particular its spatial metaphysics, is thus indispensable to this account of political Islam,

³¹⁶ As Agamben notes martial law is not the same as the state of exception, it is merely one of its manifestations.

³¹⁷ However as Agamben suggests, unless the struggle is against all forms of the state, liberal, democratic and authoritarian alike, the aporias of sovereignty will continue to haunt us.

³¹⁸ For a useful historical account of the army see Stephen P. Cohen, *The Pakistan Army* (Karachi: Oxford University Press, 1998), Stephen Philip Cohen, *The Idea of Pakistan* (Washington: Brookings Institution Press, 2004).

since Pakistan is first and foremost a series of overlapping (and conflicting) military and security spaces, and now even more so, a vast permanent space of exception. It is the complex of this (metacolonial) space that is the constitutive matrix of political Islam. It is also in this *place* that the dynamic of Pakistan's *centrifugal*³¹⁹ problem emerges. This enigmatic condition is a case of profuse sovereign anxiety and confusion, the resulting anomie of which affirms the state of exception in a vicious circularity. An element of this sovereign anxiety is commonly expressed in the popular configuration *Allah, Amrika awr Army* (the AAA); the trinity that is allegedly responsible for the fate of the country. It may even be suggested that the very emergence of Pakistan was the means to redress an anxiety of citizenship and power as it was first articulated by the nascent All India Muslim League (AIML), a movement which effectively conflated the economic insecurities of the Muslim feudal elite, with the idea of a majority Hindu India as constituting a threat to Islam, and its "*way of life*". Transformed under two centuries of colonial ordering, and now already constituted as a *bios*, Islam, so the AIML argued, "must be defended". The official slogan of the AIML in the years leading up to the partition was "Islam is in Danger". The military have thus come to regard themselves not merely as protectors of the state, but by extension, defenders of Islam, albeit a provincialized Islam. It is therefore by way of an indistinction between Islam and the nation-state, that the military justify their extra juridical *juris-diction* which extends above and over any law including the shari'a itself. In Pakistan, as any causal observer would attest, the law and the military are indistinct. The 'ulama simply wish to attain to this level of sovereignty.

³¹⁹ An allusion to both its nuclear ambition, symptomatic of a destructive will to power, and the inability of the center to hold.

And what gives the Pakistan Army its rights of proclamation — its capacity to pro-claim law? It is not because it houses the foremost intellectuals of the nation, the foremost juridical experts (Islamic or secular). It is because, and only because the Army is that institution which has the greatest capacity to wield organized violence, and which by the repeated take over of the states political and economic machinery, has effectively maintained a monopoly on death dealing. Hence with the explicit support and backing of a greater sovereign force — a force which merely amplifies its assertive capacity— the military effectively wield a deadly cocktail of powers; combining older form of sovereign power, with technologies of policing while simultaneously conscripting the biopolitical weight of nation-Islam-ummah complex. The subsequent attempt —in particular during the Afghan wars and then extended into Kashmiri policy— to directly harness and co-opt the very institutional and political cites that claim Islamic authority, from the JUI and JUP to the JI, merely produced a mutual infection enhancing and amplifying the sovereign will of each group. The recent bomb that yet again decapitated a deeply flawed yet nonetheless symbolically vital Bhutto, may itself have been a product of this indistinction between the military and the political forces of Islam. The fact that “no body” claimed responsibility or took political credit or pride in the attack, and that popular opinion regarding the identity of the attackers will probably remain split evenly between the PPP itself (Zardari), the Military (ISI) and Jihadists (or some combination of the three), is perhaps the greatest testament to this space of emergency and indistinction that this work seeks to highlight.

To begin then, with the question of the military, and the specific analysis of the proclamation, is not an idle diversion from the question of the nature of political Islam in

Pakistan. The two are inextricably linked as we shall see, for the martial technologies which have their root and ethos in colonial policing, constitute the critical element in the analysis of the political space of the ‘ulama. It is this martial space, underwritten by war, that is the constitutive matrix of political Islam, and all subsequent articulations of the ummah.

The Violence of Law and the Law of Violence

The state in which we live now, in the ‘war on terror’, is one of the endlessly suspended terrorist threat: the Catastrophe (the new terrorist attack) is taken for granted, yet endlessly postponed. ... And it is crucial here that we accomplish the ‘transcendental’ turn: the true catastrophe is already this, life under the shadow of the permanent threat of a catastrophe.³²⁰

Indeed, the state of exception has today reached its maximum worldwide deployment. The normative aspect of law can thus be obliterated and contradicted with impunity by a governmental violence that — while ignoring international law externally and producing a permanent state of exception internally — nevertheless still claims to be applying the law.³²¹

For Agamben, “in the state of exception it is impossible to distinguish between observance and transgression of the law”.³²² As a paradigmatic example of this, Agamben considers, *the Decree for the Protection of the People and of the State*, established in Germany on February 29, 1933. Similarly we may consider November 3rd, 2007. In Pakistan’s sixth decade of paralytic existence, the answer to the otherwise vexed question of national sovereignty and identity would disclose itself in yet another Martial Law Proclamation. The text of the “emergency proclamation” reads:

³²⁰ Slavoj Žižek, *Welcome to the Desert of the Real!: Five Essays on September 11 and Related Dates* (London & New York: Verso, 2002).

³²¹ Agamben, *State of Exception*.

³²² Giorgio Agamben, *The Time That Remains: A Commentary on the Letter to the Romans* (Stanford University Press, 2005), p. 99.

Whereas there is visible ascendancy in the activities of extremists and incidents of terrorist attacks, including suicide bombings, IED explosions, rocket firing ... some militant groups have taken such activities to an unprecedented level of violent intensity posing a grave threat to the life and property of the citizens of Pakistan. ... Whereas some members of the judiciary are working at cross purposes with the executive and legislature in the fight against terrorism and extremism, thereby weakening the government and the nation's resolve ... Whereas some judges by *overstepping the limits of judicial authority have taken over the executive and legislative functions* ... *Whereas the Government is committed to the independence of the judiciary and the rule of law and holds the superior judiciary in high esteem, ... [In] Accordance with the constitution and as the constitution provides no solution for this situation, there is no way out except through emergency and extraordinary measures...* I, General Pervez Musharraf, Chief of the Army Staff, *proclaim emergency* throughout Pakistan. I hereby order and *proclaim* that the constitution of the Islamic Republic of Pakistan shall remain in abeyance. This Proclamation *shall come into force* at once.³²³

This was without doubt Pakistan's quintessential postmodern moment; the execution of a coup *within a coup* — a state of emergency *within* a state of emergency. Could it be that the state of emergency, which has already for so long become the rule in Pakistan, now has to be declared within itself to sustain its sovereign efficacy? To be sure however, from its political orientation and timing right down to its language it was a provincial state of emergency within the orbit of a more global one. Thus Musharraf's proclamation, despite the U.S. State Department rhetorical and mild public disapproval, was tailor made to coincide with the broader requirements of the biopolitical logic of the 'war on terror'. But this is not just a case of the order of U.S. power extending itself more viscerally into an already militarized neocolonial space of a client regime. If the traditional 20th century mode and space of operation of US imperial power was Janus faced —democracy by day, imperialism by night—this Pakistani coup could be seen as an intensified reflection of the way in which US governmentality was asserting itself on

³²³ *Dawn News*, Karachi, 11/3/07, emphasis mine.

its own home front! If Hardt and Negri's *Empire* signals at minimum the erasure of nationalist economic borders and its subordination to global capital, then the sovereigntist logic of the war on terror would seem to inaugurate the erasure of the protective biopolitical lines between members of American *polis* and the global (Muslim) targets of its security operations.

But this emergency proclamation is remarkable not only for its paradigmatic exemplification of the paradox of sovereignty, it also reveals with clarity the discursive contradictions that emerge when a law of force seeks to legitimize itself as a force of law. The proclamation, as we read, is magically "*in accordance with the constitution*" even though the constitution does not authorize such declarations; that is to say the silence of the law, its spaces of darkness, overshadows the law itself. This silence is martialled as the necessary violence by/of the sovereign, who wields this power in the name of a silent partner who speaks directly to the *dictator*; the one who speaks. As Agamben insightfully notes the "space devoid of law seems, for some reason, to be so essential to the juridical order that it must seek in every way to assure itself a relation with it, as if in order to ground itself the juridical order necessarily had to maintain itself in relation with an anomie." We see here then what the Nazi jurist Carl Schmitt had in mind by when he talked of a theologico-political form of sovereignty. Schmitt sees the modern political form of sovereignty as effectively a secularized version of a theological concept. As British legal scholar Douzinas notes, this is the sovereign feared or celebrated in modern political theory; the sovereign who decides the exception, goes to war, annihilates his enemies, who meets out spectacular punishments to those that violate his body or writ.³²⁴

³²⁴ Costas Douzinas, "Speaking Law: On Bare Theological and Cosmopolitan Sovereignty" in Ann Orford, ed., *International Law and Its Others* (Cambridge University Press, 2006).

However as Agamben shows, the secularization of sovereignty in modern democracies does nothing to render this figure any less violent or insatiable. Schmitt was merely concerned with finding the proper locus for the exercise of sovereign decisionism, and not like Benjamin, on whom Agamben extensively draws, with undermining it. This is why it is essential to see “modern secular politics” in terms of political theology.³²⁵ The topological proximity then between an ostensibly secular army and the Islamists becomes more apparent when both are considered as variations of a political theology.

Additionally on Schmitt’s understanding, the *lacunae* within the law — those situations that are not covered by or fall outside the scope of the law — is precisely that empty space that demands and authorizes the invocation of necessity. The exercise of the sovereign exception is thus predicated on necessity and the gaps/silences within the structure of the law. Necessity is hence the hole/whole that the law has not covered, that must in some sense remain uncovered, such that the sovereign may *take its place*. I would argue that a similar structure of lacunae within the shari‘a is precisely the non-space from which the ‘ulama seek to secure a sovereign place. This *will to place* (‘*amr*) is exacerbated precisely when the ‘ulama are dislocated and suffer a decline in their regard.

Pervasive (but no longer persuasive) Musharraf

In *Rouges*, Derrida writes that “the right of the stronger has always been the best right”. This is itself “cynical confession of sovereign power to speak in the name of the

³²⁵ Of course as Derrida notes “we did not have to wait for Schmitt to know that this politico-juridical concept [of sovereignty] secularizes a theological heritage.” He thus cautions against a facile abandonment of sovereignty recognizing like Agamben, that its paradoxical, ontological status which has to be attended to. Neither cosmopolitanism (for Derrida) nor the Multitude or universal citizenship will resolve the sovereign aporia. Jacques Derrida, *Rogues: Two Essays on Reason*, Meridian (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 2005).

law, and to simultaneously violate it.” Musharraf’s proclamation asserts that it is *respectful* of the judiciary precisely through its suspension of the constitution and the sacking of the Supreme Court Justice. But is this not the suspension of respect itself? It is also perhaps the first such declaration which blurs the lines between violent religious ‘extremists’ terrorists, and the Supreme Court and its ‘*Lashkar*’ of secularized Bar Association members. As the Pakistani State/Military was busy signing MOU’s with FATA militants like Baitullah Masood, its internal security forces and police were bludgeoning lawyers and student protestors armed with dangerous placards. For the ‘protection of the people’, human rights activists had to be jailed or placed under house arrest. In this way the war against terrorism manifests effectively as a war against civil society and law itself. The task of the state is thus to co-opt law and terrorism where possible and smash them when they contravene the will of the sovereign. And so before the question, who and what is sovereign in Pakistan, and by what right/power is it exercised, here I shall ask; how *is* sovereignty in Pakistan? How is it played?

Appearing on State controlled PTV, while ‘illegally’ holding both titles of civilian President and Chief of Army Staff, (ostensibly declaring emergency to forestall any legal challenge to the continuation of his Presidency), Musharraf addressed a stunned nation.

Beginning in Urdu he declares:

... our country is at a dangerous juncture, facing a national crisis. Throughout history, nations have often had to make difficult decisions. That time has come now for Pakistan — *we* have to make important and painful decisions. If these decisions are not made then Pakistan's future is at stake. ... the decision *I* have made is, first of all, for *the sake of Pakistan*. Pakistan is above all personal interests. ...”³²⁶

³²⁶ That is to say Musharraf’s mantra might just as well be “Country First”: The penultimate biopolitical slogan.

Failing to note the deep historical and ongoing complicity between the military and the forces of violent jihadism, nurtured to perverse perfection on the Kashmiri and Afghan fronts, he continues:

“... Terrorism and Extremism are rampant. Suicide bombings are widespread. ... fanaticism is now common. Fundamentalist extremists are everywhere. ... Extremism has spread [into] the heart of Pakistan. ... They want to impose their outdated religious views upon the people. In my eyes, this is a direct challenge to Pakistan's future as a moderate nation. ... Pakistan is on the verge of destabilization... inaction at this moment is *suicide for Pakistan* and I cannot allow this country to commit suicide. Therefore, I had to take this action in order *to preserve the democratic transition which I initiated* eight years back.... To the critics and idealists against this action, I would like to say, *please do not expect or demand your level of democracy, which you learned over a number of centuries*. We're also trying to learn and we're doing well. Please *give us time*. Please also *do not demand your level of civil rights, human rights, civil liberties* which you've learned over centuries.... *Please give us time.*”

This speech affords us a series of critical remarks that will set the stage for this investigation/instigation. We can begin by noting the mundane within the already bizarre. When asked how long the emergency will last, spokesmen for Musharraf suggested a matter of months! What took the West ostensibly centuries to learn — civil rights, democracy etc. — could now be crammed with determination in the space of a few months. Since the emergency was actually lifted on December 15th 2007, a full one day earlier than he had finally proposed, we can assume that this crisis was averted and historical destiny was attained! Doubtless the relentless pressure and popular resistance by segments of an empowered civil society who opposed the military maneuver, media coverage against State brutality meted out to well (western) dressed and suited secular lawyers.³²⁷ Thus a degree of international pressure and public embarrassment for the

³²⁷ Clips of the bloody police baton charge and tear gassing of the lawyers guild made its way even to John Stewart's *The Daily Show*.

Bush administration may have resulted in pressure on Musharraf to ‘lift’ the ban. But only of course after it had accomplished a series of its ostensibly original goals; retain the Presidency and thus the military button on the power to dissolve assemblies at will; tame those segments of civil society that had learned the lessons of western democracy too fast, i.e. the media, lawyers and human rights advocates; scramble any possibility of reinstating the Chief Justice and instill a general level of dis-localized fear that will warrant the affective need for continued military preeminence; shift all of these operations under the façade of democracy as quickly as possible!

Secondly the somatic, colonial and biopolitical registers of this language are astounding. The nation is a (terrorist) *suicidal* body and he, the Führer/doctor/priest, will not allow the nation to end its miserable life! Thus Musharraf in this speech, in addition to an un-nuanced display of internalized colonial mimicry, evokes the Spirit of Hegel, by declaring that Pakistan, unlike the West, (or India), has not yet matured in the dialectical fire of history— “we need time” not democracy.! By effectively declaring Pakistan a backwards society, not yet deserving of popular (self)-rule, he was not only echoing two centuries of colonial discourse, and undermining the very ethos of *swaraj*, which animated both the Congress and the (All India) Muslim League, he was also effectively legitimating the exercise of old style monarchical forms of power and violence in order to control, discipline and pacify his unruly subjects — all in the name of the preservation of the life of the nation. Could we have asked for a more decisive formulation of biopolitical sovereignty? If at this juncture he had donned his Jodhpurs, would the performance have been less comic or more tragic? In assuming the language of a subordinate vassal, the President/General reveals the extent to which his own hold on power is dependent on

placating the sensibilities of a more distant Emperor (the West, America)— the repeated use of ‘please’, indicative perhaps of the ultimately whimsical line between *homo sacer* and the sovereign. And yet such an indictment of the army, as a subordinate local sovereign power, speaks only to the secondary dimension of the meta-colonial, the various apparatus of ongoing forms of colonialism. To probe the primary, metaphysical modality of colonization we must turn to the persistence of certain ghosts.

What then gives the Pakistan Army its rights of proclamation — its capacity to pro-claim law? It is not because it houses the foremost intellectuals of the nation, or the foremost juridical experts (Islamic or secular). It is because, and only because the Army is that institution which has the greatest capacity to wield organized violence, and which by the repeated take over of the states political and economic machinery, has effectively maintained a monopoly on death dealing. Hence with the explicit support and backing of a greater sovereign force — a force which merely amplifies its assertive capacity— the military effectively wield a deadly cocktail of powers; combining older form of sovereign power, with technologies of policing while simultaneously conscripting the biopolitical weight of nation-Islam-ummah complex. The subsequent attempt —in particular during the Afghan wars and then extended into Kashmiri proxy war policy— to directly harness and co-opt the very institutional and political cites that claim Islamic authority, from the JUI and JUP to the II, merely produced a mutual infection enhancing and amplifying the sovereign will of each group. The recent bomb that yet again decapitated a deeply flawed yet nonetheless symbolically vital Bhutto, may itself have been a product of this indistinction between the military and the political forces of Islam. The fact that “no body” claimed responsibility or took political credit or pride in the attack, and that

popular opinion regarding the identity of the attackers will probably remain split evenly between the PPP itself (Zardari), the Military (ISI) and Jihadists (or some combination of the three), is perhaps the greatest testament to this space of emergency and indistinction that this work seeks to highlight.

Sovereign Hauntology

In another nationally broadcast speech, but his time to the Reichstag on July 13, 1934, then Chancellor of Weimar Germany, Adolf Hitler, in the wake of Ernst Röhm putsch (better know as the “Night of The Long Knives”) proclaimed:

In this hour *I* was responsible for the fate of the German people, and thereby *I* became the supreme judge of the German people. ... I further gave the order to cauterize down to the raw flesh the ulcers of this poisoning of the wells in our domestic life. Let the nation know that its existence—which depends on its internal order and security—cannot be threatened with impunity by anyone! And let it be known for all time to come that if anyone raises his hand to strike the State, then certain death is his lot.³²⁸

Substitute Pakistan for Germany here and we have virtually the same biopolitical *logos* (spirit) of sovereignty expressed by Musharraf (or General Zia-ul Haq preceding him in 1977) replete with its somatic registers. To be sure as with Hitler this is not merely the old form of monarchical sovereignty, not simply the exercise of a ruthless dictatorial will, but the collapse of the figure of the leader with the national body itself. Hitler charismatically embodied the German nation and was constituted as the Führer, not merely a Quaid-e-Azam (Great Leader). And similarly with Musharraf who is merely the temporal instance of an otherwise pervasive military sovereignty, there is a similar

³²⁸ Fest, Joachim *Hitler* (New York: Harcourt, 1974), p. 469.

collapsing and merger; of the national body with the institution of the army itself. Additionally Musharraf is upheld as a model citizen/general, who in displaying genuine affection and care for the nation, stands up against the endemic corruption of elected politicians and lawyers. What is further relevant again for our diachronic and synchronic comparison is the concern that Hitler showed for ‘legally’ sanctioning the extra-judicial massacre of his former *Sturmabteilung* (SA) paramilitary loyalists, which was accomplished through the introduction of the “Law Regarding Measures of State Self-Defense.” Carl Schmitt, then Germany’s leading legal theorist, subsequently wrote an article “The Führer Upholds the Law” defending Hitler’s actions. In the words of Schmitt—now made even more infamous and relevant by the work of Italian philosopher Giorgio Agamben—“Sovereign is he who decides on the state of exception.” That is to say sovereignty is exercised and simultaneously accrues to the person (or institution) that, when declaring a state of emergency or martial law, may ‘legitimately’ suspend the validity of law. “The exception” wrote Schmidt “is more interesting than the rule. The rule proves nothing; the exception proves everything: It confirms not only the rule but also its existence, which derives only from the exception”.³²⁹ Schmitt understood the tautological nature of sovereignty, and considered liberal theory weak precisely for its failure to grasp the nature of decision (and hence its inability to deal with crisis). The assumption of the universality and rational self-evidence of law in the legal positivism of liberal jurisprudence was according to Schmidt, groundless; liberalism had to, but could not, accept the inevitability of authority and the priority of executive power. I shall return to this problem of constituted and constituting power in subsequent sections, but in

³²⁹ Carl Schmitt, *Political Theology: Four Chapters on the Concept of Sovereignty*, ed. Thomas McCarthy, trans. George Schwab, Studies in Contemporary German Social Thought (Cambridge: MIT Press, 1985), p. 15.

essence the law for Schmidt could not, *a priori*, be grounded in the will of the people or a constitution without a vicious circularity. Law requires *juris-diction*, an authority or constituting force necessary to carve out a normative homogenous space of operation, a sovereign space which is the condition of possibility for the *nomos*—the ‘normative’ operation of judicial and legislative power. In *Society Must Be Defended*, Foucault elaborates on the theory of sovereignty as itself the *diction* (saying, proclamation) of the law of law. The theory of sovereignty, first elaborated by Jean Bodin, “attempts to show, how a power can be constituted, not exactly in accordance with the law, but in accordance with a certain basic legitimacy that is more basic than any law and that allows laws to function as such.”³³⁰

For Schmitt, who does not actually solve, but merely exacerbates the problem, sovereignty functions as a kind of linguistic “quilting point”; the stable signifier that (temporarily) holds back (*epoch*) signification from being engulfed in an endless regress of abyssal circularity. That is to say the sovereign is the guarantor against insecurity, chaos and madness. And so it is not some *a priori* reason, ‘self-evident truth’ or ‘natural’ law that grounds popular assent to sovereign power, but rather an affect or sentiment whose primary modality is the uncanny, a primal anxiety—fear of the unknown. This anxiety is best exploited by concretizing it within the dynamic of the friend/enemy distinction. And thus the thrust of his 1934 essay was to appeal to the necessity of sovereign right which is the only force capable and quick enough to respond to and forestall “grave danger” facing the state/people. Doubtless we hear the resounding echoes of this tactic of law in the Bush administration, as we heard it in the formative cries of Pakistan.

³³⁰ Foucault, *Society Must Be Defended*, p. 44.

In his 1976 lectures *Security, Territory, Population*, Foucault describes Nazi political society as one where the general logic of biopower was absolutized together with the sovereign right to kill. In this “absolutely racist State, an absolutely murderous State, and an absolutely suicidal State”,³³¹ we see the ‘demonic’ convergence and intensification of both sovereignty and governmentality. Foucault used the term thanatopolitical to name dark underside of the biopolitical politics of preserving and enhancing the life of the populous.³³² What I intend to demonstrate here is how the convergences of this logic within the military space that is constitutive of the Pakistani *polis*, has extended itself to political Islam.

In the wake then of *securitas*,³³³ liberalism is effete if not complicitous with the logic of biopolitical sovereignty. The rise of neoconservatism and the era of fabricated preemption and torture is certainly evidence of that. How then might this paradox be resolved? How might the ghost that inhabits the paradox of sovereign and haunts the political be exorcised? It is precisely to figure this quandary that we might turn to the work of Agamben, whose ‘sovereignty’ may offer us a way to think the problematization of power over life with greater clarity. As Agamben reminds us “the paradox of sovereignty consists in the fact that the sovereign is, at the same time, outside and inside the juridical order.”³³⁴ Agamben’s approach to sovereignty must be understood across the ontological difference, for it seems to me as if his task is to disclose the ontological structure of sovereign power, which brings us close to the orbit of

³³¹ ———, *Security, Territory, Population*.

³³² Mbembe uses this aspect to describe necropolitics Achille Mbembe, "Necropolitics," *Public Culture* 15, no. 1 (2003).

³³³ In Roman mythology, *Securitas* was the goddess of security, especially the security of the Roman Empire.

³³⁴ Agamben, *Homo Sacer: Sovereign Power and Bare Life*, p. 25.

Heidegger's conception of enframing (*Gestell*). Thus for Agamben any resort to constitutive power, even politics perhaps, will invariably be haunted by the structure of the ban, regardless of whether power is exercised by the multitude, altruistic capitalists, benign dictators or even an elected *demos*.³³⁵ The notion that the paradox of sovereignty is the common structure of all modern political life is the point where Agamben, Benjamin and Schmitt all converge. The primary struggle is not along the democratic/totalitarian (and in our case democratic/Islamist) axis, but rather is rooted in a question of the metaphysics that undergirds sovereignty, power and the political. The task is how to think beyond the metaphysics of sovereignty towards "a post-metaphysical ontology of the political yet to be realized",³³⁶ a political space divested of the onto-theological paradox of sovereignty and the structure of the ban.

The *Polemos* of the Political

[In] conformity with a continuing tendency in all of the Western democracies, the declaration of the state of exception has gradually been replaced by an *unprecedented generalization of the paradigm of security as the normal technique of government*.³³⁷

As a figure of necessity, the state of exception therefore appears ... as an "illegal" but perfectly "juridical and constitutional" measure that is realized in the production of new norms (or of a new juridical order).³³⁸

³³⁵ The political for Agamben, is thus devoid of an ethos. It would seem that he seeks to articulate a way to conceive of action and work in ways that resemble Heidegger's conception of *Gelassenheit*. See the opening chapter on critical ontology.

³³⁶ See the superb essay William Rasch, "From the Sovereign Ban to Banning Sovereignty," in *Giorgio Agamben: Sovereignty and Life*, ed. Matthew Calarco and Steven DeCaroli (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 2007).

³³⁷ Agamben, *State of Exception*.

³³⁸ Ibid.

As William Rasch notes, “the figure of the sovereign makes those democratically inclined nervous, because democracy seeks to avoid asymmetry at all cost ... replacing sovereignty with the rule of law, as if the rule of law had no need for the personified sovereign.” When personified as an individual, an institution, or a general will, sovereignty appears as if it precedes the law, giving the law its force. The sovereign is thus a kind of shadow of the law. But the law itself is not subject to the law. The law lays down the law and demands obedience in exchange for protection under the law.

A common conceit of modern liberalism, which sees itself as supplanting the arbitrary rule of monarchy, is that a domestic “rule of law” replaces the reliance on the potentially erratic figure of the sovereign, or even the depredation of a populist mob majority (as under Nazism). The rule of law, is thus cast in opposition to the rule of men. But for Agamben this distinction which derives law from something called ‘natural rights’ is still problematic because it does not eliminate the problem of decision. Under Islamic legal reasoning, the inevitable question of the jurists decision is evaded in the same way by assuming a minimum set of transparent divine commands that simply are. It is here that Schmitt’s characterization “Sovereign is he who decides the exception” comes into play. Schmitt’s deployment of sovereignty was introduced principally as a mechanism to ground and legalize Hitler’s use of executive power. Schmitt’s challenge to liberal theory lies not so much in a kind of direct opposition to liberal thought, but as Rasch notes in his exposing of the liberal order ; showing that it is not natural or transparently rational but is itself ideological. Its power derives from its blindness to its own ideological ground, its own assumptions about power and what it means to be. That is to say liberalism is political order and not merely the outcome of rational logical

thought on the nature of justice, equality or ethics. Like any other political order it rests on a decision and not a pre-given universal norm. In this way Schmitt shows that modern liberalism is itself a variation of political theology. For Agamben to expose this theology is to expose its metaphysical ground, a ground which is paradoxical and thus meaningless. Law in this way is effectively seen as an expression of power rather what it should be an expression of justice.

On September 16th 2001, in an interview with the late Tim Russert for NBC's *Meet The Press*, (Vice) President "Dick" Cheney, declared:

We also have to work, though, sort of *the dark side*, if you will. We've got to *spend time in the shadows* in the intelligence world. A lot of what needs to be done here *will have to be done quietly, without any discussion, using sources and methods that are available to our intelligence agencies*, if we're going to be successful. *That's the world these folks operate in, and so it's going to be vital for us to use any means at our disposal*, basically, to achieve our objective.

The "Dark Side" as we have come to know has effectively meant the suspension of *habeas corpus*, the Geneva Convention and the general disregard for other international laws regulating needless preemptive war, and the degrading disciplining and punishment of "prisoners of war", including their immunity from dehumanizing treatment like torture and indefinite detention. It should be clear that in essence what was at stake in the conflict between Musharraf and the March 2007 suspension of the Supreme Court Justice Iftikhar Muhammad Chaudhry, was not only the constitutionality of Musharraf's Presidency, but also the issue of the disappearance of dozens of "terror" suspects, and their right to *habeas corpus*. In invoking the "Dark Side" then Cheney gives us what is perhaps the most opaque glimpse of the biopolitical sovereign underbelly of neoliberal governmentality. And fearful "liberal" citizens have by and large willfully

tolerated not only the torture and humiliation of the other, but have also permitted a scale of surveillance and constraining of basic rights in order to secure the homeland and victory in the war against deterritorialized, dangerous and evil Muslims everywhere. But what is distinctive here is not the deployment of a sovereign modality of power abroad, or the use of torture per se, for surely this has been a routine fixture of overt and secret US foreign policing. What is perhaps most disturbing is the attempt to normalize this dark side, to re-produce it in actuality, and fold it within the procedure of the law, thereby collapsing the distinction between sovereign violence and the law once and for all. The Bush administrations relentless will to torture and its drive to exert the power of death (legitimate killing) over its targets, is the decisive signals of this folding of sovereign power within normalizing modalities of neoliberal governmentality. The ideological name and manifestation of this tendency, driven by a metaphysics of Islam hating, is neoconservatism.

Bülent Diken's "Comedy of T(errors)" sums up the logic of *securitas* animating the decisionism of Musharraf and neoconservatism alike:

In the twenty first century state terror is called *politics of security*, which justifies itself with reference to and thus mirrors terror. Thus it can curb citizenship rights to save democracy, kill people to protect them from despots, and legalize torture to preserve human dignity.

He then quotes from the guru of the sovereign paradox: "The thought of security bears within it an essential risk. A state which has security as its sole task and source of legitimacy, is a fragile organism; it can always be provoked by terrorism to become itself terroristic."³³⁹ But then, echoing Zizek and Baudrillard,³⁴⁰ Diken suggests that it is the

³³⁹ Agamben quoted in Diken, Bulent "Comedy of T(errors)"

³⁴⁰ Baudrillard, *The Spirit of Terrorism*, p. 81.

obsession with security, living in permanent fear, that is the real victory of terrorism. On this reading the catastrophe then is the trans-political era that terrorism has inaugurated; the disappearance of politics, its becoming ob-scene; the idea that power takes place off stage. What I will be arguing for is perhaps not so much against this position, but a parallel divergence, a different emphasis and a possible reversal. It is not so much a question then of *obsession*, which would place the locus of diagnosis within an aberration of the subject (his interpretive or rational framework). Nor is it a question of “terrorist objectives”. It is not then a question of our —the ailing liberal subject—obsession with security, but rather its inverse; the obsession and grip of security on the subject. It is security itself that has a hold on the liberal and the terrorist alike. Both the civilized (West) and the barbarian (Muslim) are captured on the stage of the political, forced to march lockstep to the tune of security. The war on terror is in this sense a performance of security. The abyssal dance of death that we are witnessing in Iraq and Afghanistan, and that we may yet witness in Iran and Pakistan, is not the disappearance of politics, its obscene nature, but the final shadowy maneuvers of the political coming out to perform and dominate every scene/seen/screen. This is to say that we do not need more *constituent power* in the hands of the multitude ala Negri, but rather something altogether different if not impossible.

It is in light of the “Dark Side” then that we can situate Musharraf’s closing remarks within what I am striving to call the metacolonial; the matrixial space that will be vital for understanding the ‘ulama and political Islam itself. And so as his language tellingly shifts from Urdu to English—in a section that must have been drafted by anyone of the now numerous modern American incarnations of Tomás de Torquemada — John

Woo, David Addington, Alan Dershowitz — Musharraf directly invokes the tropes of “law-fare” discourse in the United States. He quotes directly from Abraham Lincoln’s speech that justified the first sovereign suspension of the ancient biopolitical right of *habeas corpus*³⁴¹ during the civil war. Only now the echoes of the genuine lament and apology that we may have heard in Lincoln are gone, replaced instead by a series of false “twice shy” tears. And so in this obscene yet illuminating substitution, the voice of a modern day Pakistani military “usurper” and the voice of an elected 19th century Civil War American President, come to equivalence in the state of exception that has now indeed become the rule everywhere. Buttressed then with the juridico-historical justifications for an exemplary practice of exceptionalism, Musharraf effectively blurs the distinction between himself (the military) and Pakistan, between his voice and the voice of law, between the violence of law and the law of violence. It is thus not only at radio frequencies that the Voice of America and the Voice of Pakistan converge, but also on a series of other broad-band metaphysical wavelengths. It is my contention that we need to destructure more carefully such biopolitical wavelengths. And the prime frequency at which both “Terror” and the “War on Terror” broadcast globally is the frequency of violence. It is in the resonance of these indistinctions that we can hear more clearly in the sound of the metacolonial.

To be fair, of course it was not always, nor originarily the military that have contributed to the normalization of the rule of exception. Readers of Pakistan’s leading English Language Daily, Dawn, are by now familiar with frequent accounts of the savaging of the constitution, in its relation to the saga of the 8th amendment. What

³⁴¹ “The first recording of bare life as the new political subject is already implicit in the document that is generally placed at the foundation of modern democracy: the 1679 writ of *habeas corpus*” (Agamben, *Homo Sacer: Sovereign Power and Bare Life*.)

characterizes the real tragedy and danger however is the now vastly apparent indistinction between this state of emergency— rule by military *dictat*—and the subsequent democratic transitions. This is perhaps what Agamben had in mind when he writes of the “inner solidarity between democracy and totalitarianism.” Many well off liberals and the mainstay of the bourgeoisie elite, a tiny percentage of the populace to be sure, seemed to welcome the postmodern coup. The old colonial refrain, that Indians do not deserve or are not capable of assuming democracy, echoed from virtually every corner of established privilege in Pakistan (and was echoed in conversation after conversation with many members of the Pakistani diaspora in the US as well). Under the newly elected regime/dynasty of Feb 18th 2008, the Chief Justice remains suspended and the Media, whose few years of unprecedented openness under and in spite (not because) of Musharraf, ironically, remain muted. The corrupt and ineffective interludes of democracy that routinely punctuate the otherwise formal constant of military rule, now seem to be indistinct not only with the *polis* but also the economy, as the military apparatus penetrates ever more deeply into the economic fabric of the nation.³⁴² Breaking free of this cycle of indistinction between democracy and martial law, requires at minimum a somber reflection on the place and function, if not refusal, of sovereignty itself.

The Space of War

In a most general sense the term ‘Islam’ is of course as general (or perhaps vacuous) as the term ‘humanity’ or the ‘west’, and functions more like a political metanarrative or polemical quilting point. But it is important to keep in mind that the invocation of the idea of Islam the ummah, is almost always a way to designate a mass, a

³⁴² See Siddiqi, *Military Inc.: Inside Pakistan's Military Economy*.

population, and hence an object of knowledge regulation, and policing. In this sense ummah discourses are doubly biopolitical, in that they are not merely a feature of a range of Muslim political imaginaries, but rather constitute a modality that is useful to the logic of security that drives the proliferating indistinctions of the wars of/on terror.

Transnational discourse on the ummah are perhaps, in this sense, more vital to the political economy of liberal regimes, whose pervasive logic of security and martial capacities for war thrive on the affective deployment of Islam as a vital threat. The American project for the imposition of liberal peace across the “Muslim World” is defunct without expert discourses on (political/radical) Islam as the engine of a counter-modernity, a unified homogenous plot, whose profuse resentments threaten “Western civilization” and its “way of life”. The idea of a unified ummah is thus central to the metaphysics of both Islam hating (e.g. neoconservatives) and Islam loving (*jihadists*). In our rapidly globalizing era then, the third biopolitical triad between ‘Security’, and ‘Population’ is ‘Terror’ rather than ‘Territory’. The ummah, as *Islamapolis*, may then be seen as an extension of the carceral *polis*, replete with an imaginary geopolitics, that seeks to exercise yet again the power of normalization (Islamization). What presides over these sovereign mechanisms “is not the unitary functioning of an apparatus or an institution, but the necessity of combat and the rules of strategy. ... In this central and centralized humanity [ummah], the effect and instrument of complex power relations, bodies and forces subjected by multiple mechanisms of ‘incarceration’, objects for discourses that are in themselves elements for this strategy, we must hear the distant roar of battle.”³⁴³

³⁴³ Foucault, *Discipline and Punish: The Birth of the Prison*, p. 308.

For Foucault war was the central problem of modernity. “What I would like to study would be the problem of war and the institution of war in what one could call the military dimension of [modern] society. ... How, when and why was it noticed or imagined that what is going on beneath and in power relations is a war? ... Until now, or for roughly the last five years, it has been disciplines; for the next five years, it will be *war, struggle, the army*.’³⁴⁴ In parallel, our concern here is with War (War on Terror, jihad), Struggle (*jihad, ethos*), and the Army (Pakistani Military). Foucault’s idea of war can certainly be related to Schmidt’s friend/enemy distinction and agonistic theories of the political (*ala* Chantal Mouffe). Its more significant origins lie however in my opinion in Heidegger’s conception of *polemos*.³⁴⁵ As Julian Ried notes with regard to the emergence of the disciplines, “Foucault insisted that the tactical models of military organization were of utmost importance to understand how war invests the order of power.”³⁴⁶ In *Discipline and Punish* war and the military sciences, and not the prison, are designated as the originary impetus behind the disciplining of individual bodies and the eventual transitions to carceral societies. As he extended his analysis of power from disciplinary to biopolitical regimes and modern governmentality, the problematic of war and power only intensified. *The History of Sexuality* elaborates further on the fundamental imbrication of liberal regimes, predicated on the production of ‘peace’, with war and biopower. In conjunction with Agamben then we can say that under modernity

³⁴⁴ ———, *Society Must Be Defended*.

³⁴⁵ Julian Reid, "Life Struggles: War, Discipline, and Biopolitics in the Thought of Michel Foucault," *Social Text* 24, no. 1_86 (2006). *Auseinandersetzung*, meaning war, confrontation, *logos* or *Kampf*, struggle. In later Heidegger *polemos* emerges as an ontological concept that describes the chiasmatic relationality of Being and Dasein, the crossing of the ontological difference.

³⁴⁶ Reid, *The Biopolitics of the War on Terror: Life Struggles, Liberal Modernity and the Defence of Logistical Societies*, p. 31.

the camp and the *polis* merge. The Taliban are in an essential way a merger — a daemonic combination to use Foucault's terms — of the camp and the *polis*.

Its more significant origins lie however in my opinion in Heidegger's conception of *polemos* (*Auseinandersetzung*, meaning war, confrontation, *logos* or *Kampf*, struggle. In later Heidegger *polemos* emerges as an ontological concept that describes the chiasmatic relationality of Being and Dasein). Effectively then we may say that the Army, the 'ulama and America are engaged in a war against the *demos*, the people, who in constituting a multitude could potentially take up the sovereign task — of resolving sovereignty. The possibility of assuming the responsibility of sovereignty and holding power to accountability and response-ability is thus kept at bay by the AAA. It is not only in political theory then, as Foucault suggests, that it remains to cut off the King's head.

In *State of Exception*, his sequel to *Homo Sacer*, Agamben extends the analysis of the conscription of life in the *a-polis* to include the domain of law, so as to disclose the indistinction between the political and the juridical, between law and the living being.³⁴⁷ With devastating insight into the juridical excess of the neoconservative “war on terror”, for whom the actual and always threatened suspension of law had become a measure of global dominance (a consequence itself perhaps of decaying economic sovereignty under conditions of Empire), Agamben argues that the state of exception, which was meant to be a provisional measure adopted by states under conditions of emergency, has in the course of the twentieth century, become “the dominant paradigm of government in contemporary politics.”³⁴⁸ Certainly Pakistan's perpetual state of martial law and the

³⁴⁷ Effectively, *State of Exception* which theorizes the state of exception in its historico-political and juridico philosophical context, can be read as a historical ontology of the exception.

³⁴⁸ Agamben, *State of Exception*, p. 11.

ongoing violence of military/jihadism, can be usefully comprehended through his meta-analysis.

The space of the modern *polis* is in this way understood by Agamben as coincident with the topology of the camp, whose “dislocating localization is the hidden matrix of the politics in which we are still living.” The camp can therefore be understood as a radicalization of Foucaultian biopolitics, in that it signals a disjuncture between the relationship of birth (bare life) and the order of the nation-state. This means that the camp is almost post-biopolitical, in that it marks the emergence of an instability in the structure of the old *nomos*; in the mechanism of the regulation of the relationship between territory, birth, order. Foucault of course hinted at the possibility of this daemonic and lethal mix between biopower and sovereignty, whereby the state becomes an “absolutely murderous state.” Something of this lethal machinery has now embedded itself within political Islam, and its principal expression of sovereign power, the political technology of jihadism.

Chapter IV

The Space of Law: ‘Ulama, Shari‘a and Enforcement

All societies and all cultures today (it does not matter whether they are democratic or totalitarian, conservative or progressive) have entered into a legitimation crisis in which law (we mean by this term the entire text of tradition in its regulative form, whether the Jewish Torah or the Islamic *Shari‘a*, Christian dogma or the profane *nomos*) is in force as the pure “Nothing of Revelation.” But this is precisely the structure of the sovereign relation, and the nihilism in which we are living is, from this perspective, nothing other than the coming to light of this relation as such.³⁴⁹

Enframing Islam in Pakistan

Deoband Legend

Legend has it, and it is disputed legend I might add, that, the town of Deoband got its name from the intrepid accomplishments of a local Maulana who had been called into action as pre-modern ghost buster. A family of devilish *djinns*, or (*deo*), had been plaguing the town, and the story has it that our ‘*alim* ghost buster after a protracted exorcism was able to bung up (*bund*) these devilish genies into bottles. Hence the name *Deo-band*. It is even unclear if the arrival of the *deo* coincided with the arrival of the *Faranghi*.³⁵⁰ It is of course unlikely that this *gene*-ology would stand the test of historical verification. However the legend contains a hauntological irony. For what we do know is

³⁴⁹ ———, *Homo Sacer: Sovereign Power and Bare Life*, p. 16.

³⁵⁰ That is to say the arrival of *white man* and his burden of disenchanted modernity

that it was a *jinn* of a very different sort—a *maulana* of English Constitutional Law, Muhammad ‘Ali Jinnah, known to posterity as the Quaid-e-Azam, the *Father*³⁵¹ of the Pakistani nation—who unwittingly perhaps paved the way for the unleashing of those *ghouls* that had remained bunged up for well over a century. Today these ghouls are eminently recognizable in the form of the Taliban; the power of the post-colonial Deoband having reached its apogee with the Taliban in Afghanistan, and the Taliban’s subsequently fateful alliance with al-Qaeda. Thus, from its very inception political Islam has been bound up with the politics of secularism in an inseparable and macabre tango with the biopolitical. Repeated efforts to pry the two apart have led not only to endless debates regarding the ‘true’ weltanschauung of Pakistan, its *raison d’être* (debates which are now ritually played out in the pages of every newspaper on August 14th) but also deadly conflicts.

This genealogical study has sought to locate our understanding of political Islam in terms of the metacolonial, a device which at minimum seeks to evade the false binary between culture/religion and the political.³⁵² If Pakistan today suffers from a personality disorder — a biopolitical sovereign anxiety that threatens to tear it further apart — then we must seek to understand the spirit of the malaise rather than describe the symptoms in all of its depressing detail. One aspect of this trajectory involves understanding how the complex processes of modernity and globalization have transformed the very episteme of *‘ilm* that the ‘ulama draw upon. For Foucault, the episteme as we have discussed, is linked to an art or *technē*, which in turn signals a field of knowledge/power. By paying

³⁵¹ See note on the “Father of the nation” and the *Duce* in Chapter VI.

³⁵² Talal Asad’s work on the anthropology of secularism has been influential here. See Asad, *Genealogies of Religion: Discipline and Reasons of Power in Christianity and Islam*, ———, *Formations of the Secular: Christianity, Islam, Modernity*.

attention then to the way in which the field of power, the discursive regime, has transformed we can gain a better insight into the meaning of ‘ulama praxis. This praxis does not simply reflect or for that matter distort something called tradition or Islam, but rather it reflects the dominant apparatus or *dispositif* in which discourse and practice are situated. Therefore at minimum a genealogical account begins by undermining the autonomous and privileged category of an unproblematized and monolithic “Islam” from the center stage of analysis, enabling us to think about Islam and Muslim society in full view of its own historicity,³⁵³ in view of its complex entanglements with the space of the modern in which they are always already situated.

Before we continue to probe the nature of the Deoband ‘ulama and the space of the political in Pakistan it is important to make a few preliminary clarifications. The term ‘ulama refers in its most general sense to a man of learning, or to one who possesses *‘ilm* (knowledge³⁵⁴). As such a more important question would be to enquire about the ways in which what contemporary Muslims understand by *‘ilm* may have already undergone a transformation, and if so in what way. Secondly while the singular of ‘ulama, ‘alim can

³⁵³ For an overview of the impact of the JI on the organization and structure of other traditional parties see Vali Reza Nasr, “Organization and Islamic Political Parties” in Charles H. Kennedy, ed., *Pakistan: 1995-96*, American Institute of Pakistan Studies (Boulder, CO: Westview Press, 1995).

³⁵⁴ In Arabic *‘ilm* has connotations of light and illumination and suggests an experience rather than ‘information’. While the Sufi/Mullah, *zahir/batin* dichotomy is a historical oversimplification, in a general way we could argue that a Sufi sensibility leaves open the possibility for an understanding of *‘ilm* as an experience of language (absence), whereas the ‘ulama tend to be concerned with the literal and visible aspects (presence) of knowledge. See William C. Chittick, *The Self-Disclosure of God: Principles of Ibn Al-'Arabi's Cosmology*, SUNY Series in Islam (Albany: State University of New York Press, 1998), and Julian Baldick, *Mystical Islam*, vol. 8, NYU Studies in Near Eastern Culture (New York: New York University Press, 1989). The English word knowledge is flat and homogenous, and is embedded with the dominant assumptions about what constitutes truth in the Western tradition. Thus any genuinely serious inquiry into the ‘ulama and *‘ilm* would require itself to take up the question of the will to truth in its relationship to the will to power. After Heidegger, no better guide for this critical investigation is to be found than Michel Foucault. I believe it is the single most dominant cause for the impoverishment of social science investigations that in the wake of postmodernism, they have given up being concerned with the question of truth leaving it to the domain of philosophers.

refer to any kind of learned man or scholar, the word ‘ulama today refers to a class of religious scholars. Thus a great Pakistani historian or physicist could be introduced as an ‘alim, but she would not be counted among the ‘ulama. Nor would a group of professors at a modern Muslim university be referred to as ‘ulama. The emergence of the ‘ulama as designating a class, or group, of religious scholars, is distinct in modern period³⁵⁵. By contrast an organized group of Sufi authorities are usually referred to *mashaikh* rather than ‘ulama.³⁵⁶ In addition to this there are different kinds of ‘ulama, each reflecting the orientation or style of the various sectarian groups that have emerged in 19th century India. That the primary fault line between the Sunni ulama do not overlap necessarily with the originary distinction between the four legal schools (*madhhab*) of Islam, but rather with sectarian identity, is itself in part a reflection of a biopolitical transformation of the Muslim life-world.

In this dissertation then I am concerned with examining the “Deobandi” sectarian and doctrinal orientation. The Deoband’s see themselves as a self-consciously reformist ideology, defining themselves in opposition to more “popular” syncretic styles of Muslim belief and practice on the one hand and to “modernists” on the other. The key point however is that neither ‘popular’ nor ‘modern’ scholastic authority is recognized as legitimate by the Deoband because it does not emerge from within their particular disciplinary/institutional setting. Within contemporary South Asian Islamic formations then the “Deobandis” distinguish themselves not only from the Shi‘a but also from other

³⁵⁵ Metcalf, "Traditionalist' Islamic Activism Deoband, Tablighis, and Talibs.". This fact itself may reveal something about the very modernity of the ‘ulama, their constitution as religious within a modern *episteme* which makes a distinction between religion and the secular. The ‘alim ‘ulama disjunction reflects the coding of the modern at a very fundamental level..

³⁵⁶ The word *Maulana* (master), which today has come to take on derisive connotations, used to refer to both master in the Sufi world, and to a learned scholar of the orthodoxy.

Sunni rivals such as the “Barelwis”³⁵⁷ and the *Ahl-i Hadith*,³⁵⁸ both of which also emerged in India in the second half of the nineteenth century.³⁵⁹ Needless to say each of these groups contest the other groups sources and *performances* of religious authority and power. With the exception of a general reverence for the Qur’an and the Prophet, each of these groups rarely see eye to eye on matters of religion, culture and politics, except when it comes to their loathing and contempt for the Ahmadi, another 19th century Indian phenomenon. Ahmadi’s are Muslims who regard Mirza Ghulam Ahmad (d. 1908) as a “prophet” after Muhammad. I will consider this case of the exception at great length in this and subsequent chapters, since it reveals the nature of Deobandi sovereign power in the most paradigmatic of ways. The Ahmadi as I will show have become the bare excluded life through which ‘ulama power and authority manifests itself. IN this way the Ahmadi are the cipher for understanding ulama sovereignty. Overall however, the distinctions then between traditionalist (Deoband), modernist (Aligarh, Iqbal, Pervez), popular (Barelwi) and Islamist (Mawdudi) forms of Islamic practice are imprecise and analytically unviable, and if I invoke them here it is only in a general kind of way. If my contention, in its most elementary expression, is that power rather than ideology accounts

³⁵⁷ The Barelwis revere the authority not just of the Prophet but also of Sufi saints, whom they regard as sources of spiritual guidance. For a comprehensive account of the Barelwi movement see Usha Sanyal, *Devotional Islam and Politics in British India: Ahmed Riza Khan Barelwi and His Movement, 1870-1920* (Delhi & New York: Oxford University Press, 1996). Deobandi groups generally oppose Barelwi forms of intercessionsist and shrine based religious devotion. Though Deobandi’s do not oppose all forms of Sufism, their commitment to Sufi traditions has given ay over time to more puritan and Wahabbi influences.

³⁵⁸ The Ahl-i Hadith (“people of the hadith”) are broadly speaking more literalist and simultaneously antinomian. They insist on the exclusive legitimacy of the Qur’an and hadith, and assume that they can have pure unmediated access to these texts. Effectively this means a rejection of the authority of the classical schools of law and hadith commentary.

³⁵⁹ For a brief survey of the rival Sunni groups, including the Nadwat al-‘ulama which has significant overlaps and similarities with the Deoband, see Metcalf, *Islamic Revival in British India: Deoband, 1860-1900*, Ahmad, *Islamic Modernism in India and Pakistan: 1857-1964*, and Usha Sanyal, *Ahmad Riza Khan, Makers of the Muslim World* (Oneworld Publications, 2005), p. 28 - 49.

for the political practices of the ‘ulama, then doctrinal differences are only the symbolic shadows through which actual contestations play themselves out.

It follows then that any attempt to locate authentic, traditional or modernist “Islam” in Pakistan is deeply problematic. I extend here then the calls by a number of contemporary critics for the dissolution of Islam as a category in the understanding of politics, history and society, suggesting instead that we speak of “Islams” rather than any singular essentialized phenomenon.³⁶⁰

Multiplicities of the Deoband

Viewing the Deoband as a sub-set within a sub-set of Islamic multiplicities, I had hoped that my project would help undermine, yet again, the privileged category of an unproblematic and monolithic “Islam” from the center stage of analysis. But the substitution of the more simpler, temporally and archeologically bounded Deoband for Islam was proving to be equally problematic.³⁶¹ In part, this is because the originary mantle of the Deoband is itself contested, with the various institutions of the ‘ulama having fractured and split numerous times around fundamental political principles. During the course of my interviews with contemporary ‘ulama, I also detected a heightened awareness of the multiple structural forms which the Deoband must create in order to survive in the modern age. The current editor of *Al-Farooq*, a Deoband madrasa affiliated journal, exemplified this with an aptly consumerist ice-cream metaphor: “We offer Islam in a variety of flavors, some people like the *chiko*, others vanilla, while some just hate mango.” These Deoband “flavors”, are to be found in its three primary

³⁶⁰ al-Azmeh, *Islams and Modernities*.

³⁶¹ This is also why a combined ethnographic and historical approach is essential since while historians may concentrate on texts, individual subjects don’t stand in a unilateral or determined relationship to those texts.

modalities: Educational (*dini madaris*: games of truth in the production of knowledge); Political (JUI, sectarian and jihadist outfits: technologies of government in the use and exercise of power); and Missionary/Spiritual (*daw'a*, *tabligh*: techniques of the government of self and others). Each of these modalities are intertwined and cannot be neatly distinguished from the other. Needless to say a range of political and social sensibilities pervade the 'ulama. Though here I am concerned with the more violent affects of the Deoband, affects which are invariably linked to the violence of the political itself, there are many Deobandi orientations that explicitly reject forms of violent coercion (this of course does not imply that they are apolitical). In short not every Deobandi 'alim or Talib is a militant jihadi.

As I will examine below, the Deoband's political activity is not limited to the activities of its formal political party the Jam'iyat al-'Ulama-i Islam (Society of Islamic 'Ulama' or JUI). The official political wings of the Deoband have themselves fractured numerous times around disagreements on fundamental political philosophy. The primary split occurring of course just prior to the 1947 partition, between Husain Ahmad Madani and Shabbir Ahmed 'Usmani, over the question of Muslim nationalism. Since 1947 the JUI has continued to divide into factional and militant sectarian offshoots. With regard to the *dini madaris*, there are an estimated 4000 Deoband schools, but only half are actually registered and under the curriculum control of the central *Wafaq al-Madaris* in Multan. Thus even as an educational project the Deoband is subject to potentially multiple mutations. Also the Deoband's *daw'a* wing is fused with the activities of the larger global and ostensibly non-political Tabligh-i Jama'at movement. And to complicate matters

further, many ‘ulama have deep links with the main Sufi *silsilas* within Pakistan.³⁶²

Furthermore people connected with the Deoband do not often refer to themselves as Deobandi, having only resigned to this label as a means of differentiating their *maslak*, or style of Islam, from other Sunni groups like the Barelwi, Ahl-i Hadith, Parvezis, Jama‘atis (Islamists) etc.

Thus many of the ‘ulama themselves problematized my endeavor of studying “the Deoband”. “*The Deoband*” I was politely reminded, was simply the name of the town in U.P. India where a seminary was originally instituted to “preserve and protect Islam.” More emphatically they refer to themselves not as Deobandi, but Muslims and followers of the Hanafi fiqh, thereby suggesting their conscious link with a historically authentic originary community and ideal. Complications in the task of delineating the boundaries of the Deoband are further compounded by the fact that Deoband is not a tightly centralized or homogenous institution, with the link between these three modalities remaining dynamic and fluid. Moreover as the dissertation will endeavor to demonstrate, the ‘ulama have remained remarkably adaptive and responsive to historically shifting forms of power and the broader social transformations that have accompanied modernity. By viewing Deoband political practice as rooted within historically variable relations of power and the contingencies of Pakistan’s fractured politics, rather than in any theologically grounded transcendent principles, we may account for such divergences in actual praxis.

Given this multiplicity then, one of the questions that I had been particularly interested in was understanding the ways in which the Deoband has given birth and

³⁶² For instance, Maulana Musharraf ‘Ali Thanawi, the current *mohtamim* (rector) of Lahore’s Jami‘a-Islamiyyah, has taken *bait* (oath) with a Naqshbandi, Chisti and Qadri shaikh, three of the most prominent Sufi orders in South Asia.

simultaneous patronage to “non-political,” non-violent groups, like the Tablighi Jama‘at on the one hand, and more militant groups like the Taliban³⁶³ and the virulently anti-Shi‘a *Sipah-i Sahaba* (SSP) on the other. How can a history of the present account for a multitude of new militant sectarian formations like the SSP, or the *Lashkar-i Tayeba*, both offshoots of the JUI, whose propensity to use violence to achieve their political ends is matched only by the Pakistani state itself. The enthusiastic support (both logistical and theological) for the 1994 jihad in Afghanistan, a precursor perhaps of the jihad to come in Pakistan, could, on the one hand, be viewed as a departure from the historically tacit willingness of the Deoband to work for “Islamization” and Islamic reform from within a democratic dispensation. On the other, it could be seen as a return to the original project that began not with the foundation of the Dar-ul ‘Ulum in 1866, but 10 years earlier at Shamli during the anti-colonial uprisings of 1857.

Initially part of my labor was to understand the ways in which “sources” within a long established Islamic tradition can be interpreted to justify the political program of Taliban style Islamic authoritarianism, and simultaneously the “pacifist” (or passive aggressive) agenda of *daw‘a* movements like the Tabligh. The political manifesto of the JUI, does not call for the direct capture of state power by the ‘*ulama*. However their recent backing for an extension of Allah’s (read Taliban) sovereignty to Pakistan would suggest, at the very least, a monumental shift! I discovered however that the interpretive comportment³⁶⁴ towards foundational texts (the Qur’an, Hadith, etc.) and the resultant

³⁶³ In March 2000, on the eve of their “150 years of Deoband” celebrations, the JUI, published a special issue in several Urdu dailies. In this issue, was a special message from Mulla Muhammad Omar under the title, “Amir al-Momineen,” suggesting the acceptance of his spiritual-political authority. See Chapter VI for an analysis of the Deoband Conference.

³⁶⁴ The term comportment is deliberately being employed in the Bourdeuian sense, since the Deoband *maslak* requires a regimen of bodily gestures, rituals of bodily purification, tonal specificity, markers of

vectors of political and social action embodied in the articulation of the shari‘a, are a function not of the truth of the texts, but of the complex ways through which subjectivities are themselves constituted; i.e. politically, historically and economically. That is to say political practice does not resort first to a rethinking of texts, but rather is animated by the field of biopolitical affect and sovereign power relationships that pervade the political space in which the ‘ulama operate.

The Theology of the Political

Pakistan —“homeland” for a select few of the Muslims of British India — has from its very inception, stood in an inseparable and yet paradoxical relationship with Islam, and this master signifier still remains the cite of intense and often violent contestations which continue to forge the parameters of state legitimacy and the nationalist imagination.³⁶⁵ And whereas issues around the nature of an Islamic state are hotly contested within a variety of local oppositional Islamic discourses, even within Deobandi discourse³⁶⁶ there has been significant divergence over key issues. In fact the glaring extent to which political praxis is often entirely unfettered to the ideological, not only contributes to the deconstruction of Islamist discourse itself, but goes a long way towards debunking the kind of essentialist stereotyping which fan such Orientalist fantasies as the ‘clash of civilizations’. Thus a case can be made that a political economy and a political theology in the Schmittian sense, rather than a political ideology, govern

adab, etc before approaching these sacred texts. One cannot for instance recite/read the Qur’an while walking, or without prior *niyyat* or *wadu*.

³⁶⁵ See Shaikh for an excellent account of the way in which this inability to resolve the relationship between Islam and nationalism is in part the source for the countries woes. Shaikh, *Making Sense of Pakistan*.

³⁶⁶ It should be noted further that neither the particular style of the Deoband nor its current curriculum and approach to Islam, exhaust the actual and potential possibilities of Islamic knowledges and practices.

Deoband political praxis at any given moment. This stands in marked contrast to Metcalf's analysis in her recent attempt to account for the embarrassing discovery of violent politics in the largely "apolitical" and inward pietistic and scholarly tradition of the Deoband movement.³⁶⁷ Echoing the analysis of her earlier work, Metcalf continues to regard the Deoband as predominantly expressing a certain "interiorization" of Islam. The Deoband 'ulama she writes "fostered a kind of turning away from issues of the organization of state and society, toward a concern with the moral qualities of individual Muslims."³⁶⁸ If earlier scholars like Metcalf have suggested that the 'ulama turned away from issues of state and society during the colonial period and shifted their focus to personal moral qualities, Zaman's *The Ulama in Contemporary Islam* by contrast, shows how such interpretation "have deflected attention away from the growth of radical sectarianism that has characterized Pakistani religious life in the last three decades."³⁶⁹ Such argument Zaman claims "do not provide an adequate frame of reference in which to understand the public and political dimension of the activities of Deobandi 'ulama in the twentieth century."³⁷⁰ To account for such Deobandi phenomenon as the Taliban, Metcalf makes the surprising claim that because the Deoband is essentially a private movement of interiorization and moral reflection, the Deoband must be politically hollow, and can thus take the shape of whatever political container it is embedded in.³⁷¹ If anything the Taliban

³⁶⁷ Metcalf, "Traditionalist' Islamic Activism Deoband, Tablighis, and Talibs."

³⁶⁸ Barbara D. Metcalf, ed., *Moral Conduct and Authority: The Place of Adab in South Asian Islam* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1984).

³⁶⁹ Zaman, *The 'Ulama in Contemporary Islam: Custodians of Change*.

³⁷⁰ Ibid., p.

³⁷¹ Typical of such assertions: "What is perhaps most striking about the Deoband-type movements is the extent to which *politics is an empty 'box'*, filled *expediently* and pragmatically depending on what seems to work best in any given situation." And also "*None of the Deobandi movements has a theoretical stance in relation to political life*. They either expediently embrace the political culture of their time and place, or withdraw from politics completely". Metcalf, "Traditionalist' Islamic Activism Deoband, Tablighis, and Talibs." On the one hand the "expediency" and "empty box" theory does not account for the often resolute

phenomenon and its dramatic evolution and resurgence since 2006 reveal anything but a hollow political resolve.³⁷² The focus on the Deoband as an essentially private apolitical movement of moral reform “hardly prepares one for the radical sectarianism in Pakistan in the last quarter of the twentieth century—a development in which the Deobandi ‘Ulama have been central players.”³⁷³ A similar critique is offered by Saba Mahmood, who expressly makes the Foucaultian connection between piety and politics; an extension of the feminist slogan the personal is political, and the entire culture/power series of scholarship. In her political ethnography of the Egyptian piety movement, Mahmood notes for instance how the activities of such groups seldom engage those institutions and practices that are commonly associated with the realm of politics, and the state (elections, judiciary, etc). As a result it is easy to ignore the political character of these movement whose activities tend to fall off the “political radar” of the analyst. Referring to both Metcalf and Olivier Roy, Mahmood writes that “it is quite common for scholars to consider movements of this kind—movements that focus on issues of moral reform—apolitical in character. This characterization is a gross political and analytical mistake, however, because the transformative power of movements such as these is immense and, in many cases, exceeds that of conventional political groups.”³⁷⁴

In substantial agreement with Mahmood and Zaman then I would argue that the analytical and conceptual labor of contemporary scholars needs to better grasp the

until death stance of the Taliban and other Deobandi clerics, and on the other it again betrays a simple public/private, ethics/politics, social/political binarism.

³⁷² However embedded in this insight is perhaps some conception of the role of political space in the formation of subjects. However Metcalf does not interrogate the political.

³⁷³ Zaman, *The 'Ulama in Contemporary Islam: Custodians of Change*.

³⁷⁴ Mahmood, *Politics of Piety: The Islamic Revival and the Feminist Subject*.

relationship between the ethical and the political.³⁷⁵ Metcalf was of course writing for a generation whose problematic was still rooted in the much needed critique Orientalism. However even when she considers politics in contemporary Pakistan in the wake of the rise of the Taliban, she continues to miss the opportunity to see how fundamentally political Deoband praxis is. For instance in her two essays on Pakistan, Metcalf talks about the role of the Jama‘at-i Islami in their attempts to Islamize the constitution, but fails to mention the *lead* role played by the Pakistani Deoband establishment. Nor does she consider the extensive role that the Deoband ulama has played in the persecution of Ahmadi’s in Pakistan. “Although concerned with the inculcation of individual moral virtues, members of the Jama‘at, *in contrast to many of the ‘ulama*, also insist on the transformation of the social order by political means.”

Crisis of Authority: ‘Ulama as Subalterns

Any serious account of ‘ulama violence today must situate the ‘ulama within the context not only of an emerging biopolitics but also within the crisis of ‘ulama authority and influence. Through their educational projects (*madaris*), and several vast publishing arms affiliated with the major Deoband schools, and of course through a mass army of affiliated *daw‘a* warriors (Tabligh-i Jama‘at), the Deoband had remained by and large, committed to democratic modes of intervention and influence in the public sphere. But by 1980 what was still lacking was a form of “authority” that could translate into real “political power,” without which the goal of disciplining mass society would remain

³⁷⁵ Not to do so would mean to insist on understanding Christian evangelical campaigns against abortion and gay rights, as non-political, or as expressions of an inward pietistic moral sensibility. For Foucault of course ethics, power, subjectivity and the political were all deeply interwoven and the subject of his intense meditations.

elusive. For large segments of Pakistani society and the elite class in particular, the ‘ulama were still considered to be backwards and irrelevant. Written out of the nationalist narrative due to the opposition to Pakistan by the dominant Madani faction of the JUH, public derision and ridicule of the ‘ulama was not uncommon, a fact that is not lost upon the ‘ulama themselves.³⁷⁶ In conversations with Maulana Ibn Naqshibandi³⁷⁷ he recounted dozens of popular derisive adages, the most endearing of which was “*koch logun ke liya to hum abhi tak gaun ke kuthey se bhe bhuttur hain*”³⁷⁸ Tales, and rumors, regarding the predatory homosexual exploits of the mullah, and the young boys under his care are commonplace. Liberal intellectuals in Pakistan predisposed to loath the ‘ulama, routinely dismiss them as *jahil* (ignorant).

The ‘ulama then are burdened with this double sense of irony; that within the very boundaries of a nation state that was created ostensibly in the name of Islam, those entrusted with its "preservation," those trained to speak in its name, and those conversant in the language of the sacred revelation, remain a mere subaltern, economically disempowered and at times despised class. In no small measure must this stark irony have contributed to a degree of social schizophrenia. The rise of a new form of sovereign and biopolitical governmentality among the ‘ulama, then is a development which itself must be understood within the context of the historical decline of the role and uses of the ‘ulama under colonial and postcolonial modernity. Understanding the ‘ulama’s paradoxical relationship to the modern post-colonial nation state, is hence key to showing up a variety of political tactics, like the deployment of blasphemy as a political weapon,

³⁷⁶ The biographies of Ludhianawi and Mufti Mahmood, for instance, are replete with incidents of social disregard and lamentations of declining public authority.

³⁷⁷ At Jami’a Faruqiyya, November 2000.

³⁷⁸ For some people we are still worse than the stray village dogs.

as something other than an antediluvian eruption of medieval Islamic religiosity into the well ordered teleological space of the modern. Rather than seeing Deoband political practice as a form of politics outside of time, as counter modern, I argue that religio-political groups like the Deoband cannot be understood outside the concrete manifestations of modern governmentality. By a mixture of both design and contingency, the ‘ulama have effectively negotiated the various spaces and networks of power to invigorate and empower their movements and institutions, thereby marking out a form of political, cultural and economic influence for a subaltern constituency whose cultural and political valency were otherwise dissolving under the weight of a modernizing postcolonial state. But it is not merely on the register of an economy of power that I seek to advance my claims. What I am suggesting, perhaps more significantly, is that the Deoband, in their becoming political, do not in fact contest the rudimentary cartography of political modernity (i.e. the idea of sovereignty, nation, state, government, population, society, citizen, technology, etc). It is perhaps only at the second order level of political culture and the politics of identity (which again are not divorced from the question of power), that discursive posturings play out as markers of difference and distinction.³⁷⁹ The survival of the Deoband as an institution and a political force is thus a marker of its ineluctable entanglement with the modern.

An understanding of the Deoband’s gravitation towards forms of violent and coercive political activism, is represented most clearly by their support for and creation of sectarian and jihadist groups. This turn, however must be situated through an understanding of the ways in which the State, especially since the 1980’s, has attempted

³⁷⁹ However this second order of the political, or flavoring, should not occlude the fact that what is still being served up is supper.

to infiltrate, control and harness orthodox Islamic institutions. These state attempts to deploy and manipulate “Islam” and Islamist forces for the legitimization of martial rule and for the waging of proxy wars (Afghanistan and Kashmir), resulted in the artificial political empowerment of groups like the Deoband. Under the catalyst of this state intervention, the otherwise politically marginal communities of Islamic orthodoxy, have transformed themselves into agents of jihad and brokers of increased socio-political power. Given the ways in which the Pakistani martial state has, historically, legitimized the use of violence, intimidation and coercion as the means for political participation and negotiation, we can begin to see how newly empowered Islamist political groups have themselves deployed the symbolic weight of Islam, and the blasphemy laws in particular, in order to advance their claims of political leadership. More importantly we can trace the ways in which the ‘*ulama* themselves exercise forms of policing power over and above both civil society and the sovereign authority of the state.

One of the crucial elements of the state of exception is described by Agamben as the merger and indistinction between *auctoritas* and *potestas* (authority and power). The real crisis arises, argues Agamben, when the two elements of *auctoritas* and *potestas* combine in one person or institution and the state of exception becomes the rule.³⁸⁰ The crisis of the ‘*ulama* in Pakistan can thus also be seen as the merger between the desire of authority and the conscription of the ‘*ulama* within geopolitical spaces of power. Traditional ‘*ulama* authority, already in decline in Pakistan³⁸¹ merges with a desire for *potestas*. What happens when the background series of assumptions that convey traditional authority with power are transformed by colonialism on the one hand and the

³⁸⁰ Agamben, *State of Exception*.

³⁸¹ Malik also makes the claim that under postcolonial state, the traditional space of ‘*ulama* authority has been in decline. See Malik, *Colonialization of Islam: Dissolution of Traditional Institutions in Pakistan*.

emergence of populations on the other? We could then characterize the postcolonial transformation of the Deoband as the shift from *taqlid* to *jihad*: the desire for the maintenance of authority through the promotion of *taqlid* to the desire for power through the promotion of *jihad*. The conjunction between *auctoritas* and *potestas* seems to be well illustrated in the phenomenon of Talibanization. I would argue that the precursors for this transformation are not simply the events of 1979 which led to the deployment of the mujahideen. Rather it is the *statification* and biopoliticization of Islam, signaled first by the creation of Pakistan, and subsequently by the Iranian revolution.

Towards a Conception of ‘Ulama Governmentality

Our thesis at its most elemental, simply asserts that the transformations of political Islam are best understood in terms of biopoliticization. How does this biopoliticization play out, and what does it mean to say that the space of Pakistan coincides with the metacolonial as opposed to the postcolonial? Further we may ask in what way has Islam today, in its coincidence with life, been emptied of its ethical possibilities? How much of the hollow rattling that goes on in Islam’s name (liberal, traditional or fundamentalist) is merely the raucous anxiety of a nihilism that refuses its own recognition? The task of reading the space of exception therefore lies in a recognition of an entirely different sort.³⁸²

Though Walter Benjamin did not use the term, if he were to outline the basic thrust of a biopolitics it would mean to think history as the normalization, the becoming

³⁸² Contra, that is to say to Seyla Benhabib, *The Rights of Others: Aliens, Residents, and Citizens*, The Seeley Lectures (Cambridge University Press, 2004).

rule, of the state of emergency.³⁸³ For Agamben, the task of critical thought is to offer a testimony³⁸⁴ of the way in which life, in its state of exception, has now become the norm under modern biopolitical regimes.³⁸⁵ What is the nature then of the biopolitical regime of the ‘ulama? As I have discussed in Chapter 2, biopolitics in its broadest sense, is a politics of life, where life is understood in an exclusively biological³⁸⁶ and technological fashion³⁸⁷ (bio-tech). The inclusion of this bare, biological, life in the political order “constitutes the original – if concealed – nucleus of sovereign power. *It can even be said that the production of a biopolitical body is the original activity of sovereign power.*”³⁸⁸

The remaining task of this chapter will be to situate ‘ulama political practices in terms of sovereign power. If we can show that the structure of the exception is consubstantial with Islamist politics, then our claim regarding the indistinction between Islam and the West will take on added plausibility, thus running counter the dominant barrage of imperial and governmental discourses on Islam which assert a fundamental if not incommensurate difference.³⁸⁹ By placing life at the center of their own political strategies, the practices of the modern ‘ulama, like the modern State, disclose this secret of power, otherwise concealed under the banner of fidelity to Islam and the shari‘a. Thus the form of power

³⁸³ “The tradition of the oppressed teaches us that the ‘state of emergency’ in which we live is not the exception but the rule. We must attain to a conception of history that is in keeping with this insight”.

³⁸⁴ For Agamben, testimony refutes the “isolation of survival from life”, the separation of a sphere of naked life (bare life, *zoē*) from the context of the forms of life (*bios*). “The witness attests to the fact that there can be testimony because there is an inseparable division and noncoincidence between the inhuman and the human, the living being and the speaking being, the *Muselmann* and the survivor ... Testimony thus guarantees not the factual truth of the statement safeguarded in the archive, but rather its unarchivability, its exteriority with respect to the archive.” Agamben, *Remnants of Auschwitz : The Witness and the Archive*.

³⁸⁵ ———, *Means without End: Notes on Politics*.

³⁸⁶ In the essay *Form-of-Life*, Agamben understands biological life as “the secularized form of naked life.” Ibid.

³⁸⁷ That is to say with Heidegger, that life is understood as fact rather than facticity.

³⁸⁸ Agamben, *Homo Sacer: Sovereign Power and Bare Life*. And later more famously, “the entry of *zoē* into the sphere of the *polis* – the politicization of bare life as such – constitutes the decisive event of modernity.”

³⁸⁹ Jihadist discourses of course also share this structure of essential difference.

exercised by the ‘ulama today is linked to that “most immemorial of the *arcane imperii*”³⁹⁰ that Agamben discusses in *Homo Sacer*. And it is precisely this link, the link between bare life and politics, which “secretly governs the modern ideologies seemingly most distant from one another.”³⁹¹ In what way then is Islam, like Marxism and Liberalism, “embedded in a wider history of metaphysics, of which it remains unaware.”³⁹²

A historical genealogy thus seeks to disclose the way in which the being of life is understood, and to expose the way in which this understanding manifests in practices, and operates, unnoticed, in the background of the modern episteme of biopolitics (*technē*). For Foucault the history of being,³⁹³ its shifts from one episteme to another, is generally marked by the transformations and mutations of power in the modern age; governmentality as pastoral power merging with police power, biopower as the transformation of sovereign power and disciplinary power in the context of the emergence of sexuality, and so on. Foucault’s grammars of power should be seen in this light, as ways of illuminating the various modes of subject production as a prelude to accounting for what we have become today, and as inducement for thinking otherwise. His terms were therefore not designed to stand as permanent theories of the political, or as a methods for the analysis of political structures, but rather they are anti-concepts, inept motifs that help shed light on the multiple ways in which modern life and

³⁹⁰ The *arcane imperii* is literally the secret of power. But what is this secret Agamben does not quite say. We surmise that this secret of power is the sovereign secret, which is to say an ontological secret, namely the covering over of the withdrawal of being. And it is an immemorial secret, not because it is timeless or very old but rather because it is no longer in memory, forgotten.

³⁹¹ Agamben, *Homo Sacer: Sovereign Power and Bare Life*.

³⁹² Michael Lewis, *Heidegger Beyond Deconstruction: On Nature*, Continuum Studies in Continental Philosophy (Continuum International Publishing Group, 2008).

³⁹³ This history of being, as we have seen in Part 1, is not confined to some wholly other transcendental sphere, but instead participates, through its crossing, in the economy of power and the *polis*. Being is always therefore also a question of power.

subjectivity is constituted and constrained (even through the powers of freedom).

Biopower is hence the assumption of the political and the subsumption of life within its space (space of the *polis*).

If the potentiality of Islam was once constituted as a “way”, a way toward being/Allah, if the shari‘a³⁹⁴ itself designated the wisdom of this ‘path’ and ‘way’, if the ‘ulama and *fuqaha* were regarded as men of understanding and illumination, then today we can speak of Islam as having transformed into a way of life, the shari‘a into a force of law, and the ‘ulama as hollow men possessed by power. A proper archaeology and genealogy of this transition remains to be thought and written.³⁹⁵ But this is to say that today Islam, like the West, is firmly in the ‘grip of technology’,³⁹⁶ a grip which we can best see in terms of biopoliticization.³⁹⁷ What does ‘ulama politics reveal about the nature of the *polis*, the political space in which the ‘ulama dwell. This space, as we shall see is revealed to be hollow, ethically (and ontologically) hollow, and is thus only a space of power. The ‘ulama dwell in this space; their city/camp is the *Islamapolis*. Thus a genealogy will not principally be concerned with the biographical narration of the lives of

³⁹⁴ It is not arbitrary then, in a formulation that continues with the Deoband, that handbooks of Shari‘a, begin with and are predominantly concerned with the forms of ritual and worship (*‘ibadat*) and only secondarily with what would fall under the domain of modern law (*mu‘amalat*).

³⁹⁵ That is to say a proper history of the Shari‘a as apparatus (apparatus of capture and closure, of being, the Shari‘a as the induction of a certain positivity and history) has yet to be written. This historical investigation is beyond the scope of our talents, but it should be evident that this transformation and ossification far predates the colonial modern, and can be traced to the emergence of canon law and Shari‘a in the 9th and 10th centuries of Islam, when the works of Aristotle, Plato and Plotinus were permeating discussion of Arabic philosophy, *kalam* (scholastic theology) and jurisprudence. In such a history we would note that colonialism plays the role of a certain amplification and conduction, and not originator of these apparatus. Colonialism thus serves as the amplification of a threshold which is itself metacolonial. As noted Chapter 4, “meta” is itself a polysemic spatial signifier, meaning both beyond and after and also above and alongside.

³⁹⁶ Beistegui’s phrase.

³⁹⁷ Islamic history thus folds within the epoch of technology, an epoch which itself unfolds as *Gestell*. Within this epoch, being is unveiled as beings, as energy and standing reserve. The challenge of a genealogy (a critical historical ontology) of Islam lies in adequately problematizing the historical situation (epoch) of Islam with respect to being.

the ‘ulama, or plot out the chronological details of its political machinations. Our concern is instead with the political being of the ‘ulama,³⁹⁸ their biopoliticization and supplication towards sovereign power.

My interest in shifting from a primarily postcolonial modality to a metacolonial one, lay in the increasing obviousness that the problems of Islamic violence could not simply be written under the banner of an archeology of the imperial³⁹⁹ gaze, for there is something decisively imperial in the gaze of the ‘ulama themselves. This shift to the *meta-* does not by any means dispense with the importance of the effects, historical and ongoing, of classical imperial formations, but instead seeks to broaden the temporal and spatial terrain of our understanding of sovereignties nefarious modalities, each of which fold upon and multiply the other, producing new and ever more complex formations. The deltas and tributaries of sovereign power merge with, mesh and disperse other forms of disciplinary, governmental, and biopowers. Rather than understand ‘ulama political technologies as the unfolding of some kind of original Islamological imperative, or even as the corrupt expression of some unadulterated Islamic truth, I am trying to understand ‘ulama politics in terms of sovereignty and the performances of power, performances whose affective resonances both maintain the space of power as well as produce new spatial effects.

To speak of the biopoliticization of the Deoband ‘ulama, thus means attempting to understand the transformation of ‘ulama practices (*‘ilm awr amal*) as a corollary of their conscription within the space of the modern *polis* (the *apolis*). Thus while it is tempting to view the corruption and violence of the Pakistani Deoband primarily in terms

³⁹⁸ In Heideggerian terms this means illuminating the worlding, or facticity of the ‘ulama, their being-in-the-world. This world is not a universal world, but a spatio-temporal world.

³⁹⁹ Assuming “imperial” designates both historical and neo-colonial power.

of its alliance with the state and the military, from the perspective of a history of power, the story is somewhat more complex. Characteristically, and against the mainstream left, both Foucault and Agamben viewed power in terms that did not privilege the state apparatus as the source of violence. Rather the state was itself the threshold effect of a political *a priori*, an *a priori* which we have identified under the general umbrella of *Gestell*, but more specifically as the *apparatus* in Foucault, and *sovereignty* in Agamben. With his grammars of power Foucault is effectively expanding the geography of violence, making visible new spaces where power operates, spaces that are often hidden or do not usually manifest as political.

The problem for a critical reading of political Islam then is to arrive at some understanding of this shift in the Islamic episteme and its historical/political *a priori*. As Foucault wrote famously in his governmentality essay:

We all know the fascination which the love, or horror of the state exercises today, attention is paid to its history its advance, its power its abuses. The excessive value placed on the state is expressed in two ways: one form is the immediate, affective and tragic, is the lyricism of the *monstre froid* we see confronting us. But there is a second way of overvaluing the problem of the state, one which is paradoxical because it is reductionist ... But the state, no more today than at any other time in history, does not have this unity, this individuality, this rigorous functionality, nor to speak frankly this importance. The state is no more than a composite and a mythicized abstraction, whose importance is a lot more limited than many of us think. *Maybe what is really important for our modernity – our present – is not so much the étatisation of society, as the ‘governmentalization’ of the state.*⁴⁰⁰

Similarly for Agamben, while the state deploys a brutal form of mythic violence, the sovereign effect is prior to the constitution of the state. Agamben as we have seen, analyzed the way in which figures like Schmidt and Hobbes deployed the concept of

⁴⁰⁰ Gordon, Burchell, and Miller, eds., *The Foucault Effect: Studies in Governmentality*.

sovereignty as a mechanism to legitimize the state and its deployment of what Benjamin called ‘mythic violence.’ Opposed to mythic violence in Benjamin’s critique of the political, was divine violence.⁴⁰¹ Mythical violence, either in the form of state or revolutionary violence (“law-preserving” or “law-positing” or constituted and constituting power) comprised the space of the modern political against which Benjamin, and following him Agamben, sought to think. Consequently, the depredations of the ‘ulama in the modern period, should be understood not in terms of the adoption of medieval formulations of Islamic jurisprudence and their blind, literal and disconcerting application within modern polities, but rather, in terms of our thesis, of the biopoliticization of Islam; that is to say in terms, roughly, of two movements, governmentalization and juridification. For Agamben, juridification represents the coincidence of life and law, its biopolitical becoming, which is reflected in the popular characterization of Islam, among liberals and conservative alike, as a “way of life.”

If anything characterizes modern democracy as opposed to classical democracy, then, it is that modern democracy presents itself from the beginning as a vindication and liberation of *zoē*, and that it is constantly trying to transform its own bare life into a way of life and to find, so to speak, the *bios* of *zoē*.⁴⁰²

Agamben’s characterization here of the link between bare life and way of life finds its continual echo in the near universal characterization of Islam as “a way of life”, and the ummah as a political “society which must be defended.”

⁴⁰¹ Benjamin, *Critique of Violence*. On my reading, this distinction between mythic and divine roughly corresponds to the distinction between *potere* (political power) and *potenza* (ethical power).

⁴⁰² Agamben, *Homo Sacer: Sovereign Power and Bare Life*.

Yet another popular fundamentalist mantra —Islam is a “complete code of life,⁴⁰³—also betrays its underlying technological understanding. The juridification or codification of Islam, its reduction to an ideology of *nizam* (system) thus further signifies its collapse and indistinction with the shari‘a. So we are speaking not of the Islamization of modernity, but the modernization of Islam, and its final coincidence with the history of the West. At the technological apogee of this history the shari‘a is deployed as strategic and tactical instrument, as war by other means.

As Masud, Messick and Powers note, in the historical formation of Islamic law an important division within juristic labor marks the relation of the shari‘a to the concrete world of human affairs. While marking off the juridical from the worldly may itself be problematic to begin with, they nonetheless draw our attention to an important point.

Across time and space, two distinct categories of legal interpreters have stood at the meeting points of law and fact. The domain of legal procedure, including adversarial cases, rules of evidence, binding judgments, and state enforcement, belongs to the judge (*qadi*); the issuance of nonbinding advisory opinions (*fatawa*, or *fatwas*) to an individual questioner (*mustafti*), whether in connection with litigation or not, is the separate domain of the jurisconsult (*mufti*). In their different venues, both *qadi* and *muftis* have specialized in handling the everyday traffic in conflicts and questions falling within the purview of the shari‘a.⁴⁰⁴

My argument here suggests that one way of characterizing the transformations undergone by the modern Pakistani Deoband, is the gradual indistinction between the role of *mufti* and the role of *qadi*. In the modern period the Deoband ‘ulama have largely been seen as *mufti*’s, and the madrasa was largely a cite for the production of *muftis* who

⁴⁰³ This phrase was popularized in Pakistan by Ghulam Ahmad Parvez. See Gulam Ahmed Parvez, *Islam: A Challenge to Religion* (Lahore: Idara-e-Tulu-e-Islam 1968). Only in the antinomian strands of Sufism, is this link between law and life openly problematized. See for instance Eric Winkel, *Islam and the Living Law: The Ibn Al-'Arabi Approach* (Karachi: Oxford University Press, 1997).

⁴⁰⁴ Muhammad Khalid Masud, Brinkley Messick, and David S. Powers, eds., *Islamic Legal Interpretation: Muftis and Their Fatwas*, Harvard Studies in Islamic Law (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1996).

could offer non-binding legal opinion. All the major madaris have *ifta* departments, which collect legal assessment or rule (*hukm*). However under the regime of the Taliban, the distinction between the mufti and the qadi, *hukm* and state law have collapsed, as Islam is fully subsumed by the imperatives of state authority.

Legislative Exorcism and the Deoband Anti-Ahmadiyya Movement

[Governmentality] is a question of not imposing law on men but of disposing things: that is, employing tactics rather than laws, and even of *using laws themselves as tactics*.⁴⁰⁵

Central to Agamben's analysis of modern forms of biopolitical sovereignty is the description of the capture of bare life by the state and the legal order, in order to produce the figure of *homo sacer*. The characteristic modality of the 'ulama in Pakistan today lies in precisely this deployment of sovereign power, and the production of the heretic as *homo sacer*. Through the success of the "Objectives Resolution", the order of the shari'a continues to haunt the body of state law and the constitution, lying at once inside and outside the law. The juridical tools that have been complicit with the 'ulama and the state's production of *homo sacer* are of course the notorious blasphemy laws that were formally established by the state during General Zia ul-Haq's dictatorial tenure. Agamben's reference to the jurist in the following remark, is aptly characteristic of the way in which the 'ulama have crossed a biopolitical threshold.

If there is a line in every modern state marking the point at which the decision on life becomes a decision on death, and biopolitics can turn into thanatopolitics, this line no longer appears today as a stable border dividing two clearly distinct zones. This line is now in motion and

⁴⁰⁵ Foucault.

gradually moving into areas other than that of political life, areas in which the sovereign is entering into an ever more intimate symbiosis not only with the *jurist* but also with the doctor, the scientist, the expert, and the *priest*.⁴⁰⁶

The problem of blasphemy that has now migrated from the domain of the *qadi* and the fatwa to the domain of the state, is an exemplary phenomenon which betrays ‘ulama complicity with the will to sovereign power.⁴⁰⁷ According to Maulana Waheed Khan at Jami‘a Faruqiyya, the legislative exorcism of the Ahmadiyya was one of the major achievements of the Deoband in the “defense of Islam.”⁴⁰⁸ Deoband sovereignty is thus expressed through the inclusive exclusion of the Ahmadi⁴⁰⁹ within the scope of shari‘a law, a law whose juridification is marked by its taking on the aporetic dialectical structure, or topology, of the ban. The ban on the Ahmadi brings the body of the Ahmadi, now rendered *homo sacer*, within the legal orbit and scope of their mythic violence, and

⁴⁰⁶ Agamben, *Homo Sacer: Sovereign Power and Bare Life*. My emphasis on *jurist* and *priest* (i.e. ‘ulama)

⁴⁰⁷ I am by no means asserting that only today has blasphemy become an issue. Clearly the matter has a long historical provenance; from the Kharijite’ assassination of Muhammad’s cousin ‘Ali, to the revolt of the famed student of Hasan al-Basra, Wasil ibn Ata (d.749), who founded the Mu’tazilites School (from Arabic verb *i’tizal* “to part or separate from.” What I am asserting however is the ubiquity and intensity of the phenomenon today, the way in which the core tool of exceptionalism, is yielded by an increasingly large and diverse array of individuals and institutions, including but also beyond the state apparatus.

⁴⁰⁸ Ironically he cited Deoband’s ‘military’ opposition to the British during the colonial period, as their greatest legacy!

⁴⁰⁹ The Ahmadi are a Muslim community that emerged as a distinct doctrinal movement in late nineteenth century India. The Ahmadiyya derive their name from their spiritual leader Mirza Ghulam Ahmad (1835–1908) who claimed to be the *Mujaddid* (divinely inspired reformer). It is however precisely what he claimed and did not that is the subject of severe contestation. His severest critics charge that he claimed for himself the status of a *nabi* (prophet) thus contravening the idea that Muhammad was the last prophet of God. This is the basis upon which many Sunni’s derive their animus, going as far as accusing the movement of being a colonial and Zionist conspiracy. Most of his followers however regard him to be the promised Messiah or Mahdi. Ghulam Ahmad who initiated the first members the Ahmadiyya community in 1889 was born on Friday February 13, 1835 in the town of Qadian, in Punjab, India. His followers are thus also called Qadiani’s. There are two principal splits within the Ahmadiyya Jama‘at, between the Lahori Ahmadi, and the Qadiani. The split, which rarely manifests in violence, is based on a dispute over succession and the precise meaning of Ghulam Ahmad’s status as a Mahdi. The Ahmadi’s today are a world wide community, though the largest population remains in the Pakistani town of Rabwah. For further details see Antonio Gualtieri, *The Ahmadi: Community, Gender, and Politics in a Muslim Society* (Montreal: McGill-Queen’s University Press, 2004). More recently Simon Ross Valentine, *Islam and the Ahmadiyya Jama’at: History, Belief, Practice*, Columbia/Hurst (Columbia University Press, 2008)..

it is this assumption of sovereign power, I would argue, that constitutes a real heresy (*shirk*). This is a strategic form of what Agamben calls “the ordering of space”, a practice that is constitutive of the sovereign *nomos*. As we saw with the military, what is at issue in the sovereign exception, the ban, “is not so much the control or neutralization of an excess as the creation and definition of the very space in which the juridico-political order can have validity.”⁴¹⁰ The state of exception—which is effectively a “complex topological” relation between outside and inside, between “the normal situation and chaos”—is the device that makes the validity of the juridical/shari‘a order, and by extension ‘ulama sovereignty, possible. The law of punishment for the apostate, fundamentally reconfigures the relationship of the ‘ulama with law and death. Properly speaking the thanatopolitical, that is to say sovereign, expression of modern biopower, is enshrined in the decision of life and death and the right to kill. The relocation of this declaration within the sphere of the shari‘a, effectively redirects sovereign power towards the ‘ulama, with their capacity and authority to declare apostasy (*takfir*).⁴¹¹ The declaration of the heretic is therefore a move, a juridical weapon, which exposes “the secret tie uniting power and bare life.”⁴¹² Sovereign power needs a subject that can be abandoned to its “law beyond the law”.⁴¹³ This right of declaration of the exception, and the sanctioning of death, constitutes a form of sovereign authority. As Agamben argues, this state of exception is more fundamental to sovereignty than the law itself. It constitutes the very condition of possibility for juridical order. The shari‘a is therefore deployed as sovereign currency in the wider biopolitical networks of the metacolonial

⁴¹⁰ Agamben, *Homo Sacer: Sovereign Power and Bare Life*.

⁴¹¹ The right to declare a Muslim a *kafir*, thus taking the individual out the bonds of Muslim community and hence protection.

⁴¹² Agamben, *Homo Sacer: Sovereign Power and Bare Life*.

⁴¹³ Ibid., p. 59. This subject is of course the *homo sacer*.

state. In simpler terms the shari‘a, is a means to an end of political power. It is no longer a path or a way, but a law that must be obeyed. In the *polis* the shari‘a is war by other means, a decisive weapon in the clash of local sovereignties.

The Logic of the Caesura: The Proliferation of Islams

The Deoband began under a single pomegranate tree in the town of Deoband in 1867 and forged a single political organization the Jam‘iyyat al-‘Ulama-i Hind (Organization of Indian Islamic Scholars) in 1919. In 1945 the party split along nationalist differences, with Maulana Shabbir Ahmad ‘Usmani taking leadership of the JUI-Pakistan faction. Since 1947 the endless logic of the caesura that is Pakistan, has played itself out within this organization. After its first split between its pro-Pakistan (‘Usmani) and pro-India (Madani) factions, the JUI began its inevitable mutation into a dozen smaller and often competing groups. Up until the 1979, however these divisions between the sub-groups were largely confined to a non-violent political, though often vitriolic, arena. Internal skirmishes were largely political, but rarely violent. The second sovereign event however, 1979, has resulted in the intensification and far more dangerous mutation of these group which now has over 40 different sub-political organizations, some allied others at violent loggerheads.

During my research period in 2001, I regularly posed a series of question regarding the differences between the Deoband and the Barelwi, to virtually everyone I met, from taxi drivers and pan shop vendors, to businessmen, lawyers and members of the military. Outside of the madaris, I never once, in well over a hundred encounters, was able to get anyone to explain to me the principle theological differences between the

major South Asian splits within the Sunni Hanafi traditions; Deoband, Barelwi and Ahl-i Hadith. The majority questioned were not even aware of these splits within mainstream Sunni Islam and had only a vague sense of what branch their own Sunni identity corresponded too (either in terms of *madhhab* or *maslak*). Even when the Taliban hit headlines in 1994, few people could connect the name Deoband to the Taliban. It comes as no surprise then that the principle theological differences within the Deoband, between the *Hayati* and the *Mamati*,⁴¹⁴ are even more baffling obscure, and are themselves rarely the cause for divisions.⁴¹⁵ Divisions are almost always political or communal, beginning with the original differences over nationalism between Hussain Ahmad Madani and Shabbir Ahmad ‘Usmani; that is to say the more enduring splits within the Deoband are not theological but are rather *biopolitical*.⁴¹⁶

While the JUI is the largest religio-political organization in Pakistan, it has never been able to obtain even the meager Parliamentary seats it has without forming political alliances. On average, and even including the recent 2002 elections, the JUI has rarely been able to garner more than 2 – 3% of the popular vote.⁴¹⁷ Very often the two major factions of the JUI, the JUI (Sami-ul Haq) and JUI (Fazlur Rahman) would form different coalitions. The high point of the JUI’s cooperation with other regional and nationalist parties occurred during the 1977 General election, with the formation of the *Qaumi Itihad*

⁴¹⁴The split between the *Hayati* and the *Mamati*, like the split between the Deoband and the Barelwi, revolves around the question of the ‘living’ (from *Hayat*, life) status of the Prophet. The *Hayati* position is closer to that of the Barelwi, in claiming that the Prophet has an invisible yet living presence among the ummah. The *Mamati*, like the Ahl-i Hadith, believe that the Prophet is only living in a special abode within Heaven.

⁴¹⁵ Pirzada’s book on the JUH does not even mention this difference, testifying to the secondary role of the theological versus the political within these Islamist organizations. See Pirzada, *The Politics of the Jamiat Ulema-I Islam Pakistan, 1971-77*.

⁴¹⁶ That is to say over which society is to be defended!

⁴¹⁷ All Islamist parties combined, with the exception of 2002, rarely garner more than 10% of the national vote.

(National Unity) group led by Fazlur Rahman's father, Mufti Mahmud (1919-1980).

Qaumi Itihad then became the *Nizam-i Mustapha* group which led a concerted campaign against Zulfikar 'Ali Bhutto's PPP.

While the JUI, throughout its political career, have always battled to introduce a *Shari'a Nizam* (system) within Pakistan, the efforts have largely been confined to the sphere of constitutional amendments and changes through assembly and committee work (the Objectives Resolution). The *Nizam-i Mustapha* movement (Movement to Establish the System of the Prophet) took this essential thrust of the JUI to a larger and more proactive political level. Ironically it was the 5th July 1977 declaration of martial law by the Army Chief of Staff, General Zia ul-Haq, that effectively took the wind out from the sails of the *Nizam* movement. Subsequent division in the JUI revolved around the question of support for Zia's "Islamist" putsch. Whereas Mufti Mahmud and following his death on 14th of October 1980, Fazlur Rahman, worked with the PPP through the anti-Zia coalition the MRD (Movement for the Restoration of Democracy), the JUI (S) gave tacit support to Zia and were closely allied with the Mujahideen effort against the Soviets. However despite the political opposition to Martial Law, both factions cooperated with Zia and were drawn into the power struggle of the Great Game. It was through the prestige, money and power that accrued to the new jihadist outfits that a revival in the political fortunes of the JUI was accomplished. The exponential growth of madaris during this period is simply one indicator of this transformation.

The various Deoband arms, wings and offshoots, can be seen to roughly correspond with sectarian (national) and jihadist (trans-national) thrusts.⁴¹⁸ The sectarian divisions form three tactical fronts; against the Ahmadi, against the Shi'a, and against the Barelwi. The organization dedicated to armed opposition against the Shi'a include, the notorious *Sipah-i Sahaba* (SSP, Soldiers of the Prophets Companions),⁴¹⁹ and the SSP breakaway group the *Lashkar-i Jhangawi* (LeJ, Army of Jhang⁴²⁰) formed by Akram Lahori and Riaz Basra. The SSP was founded by the rabidly anti-Shi'a cleric Maulana Haq Nawaz Jhangawi and Maulana Azam Tariq (1962—2003) in 1985. The *Lashkar-i Jhangawi's* militant leader Riaz Basra routinely made headlines in the 80's and 90's and was one of the most wanted men in Pakistan prior to Mullah Omar. A former member of the SSP, and the *Salar-e-A'ala* (Chief, or Excellent, Commander) of the Jhangawi group, Basra was killed in a "police encounter" on May 14, 2002.⁴²¹ Lesser know groups include

⁴¹⁸ It might also be mentioned that in addition to these sectarian and jihadist groups which are often at loggerheads with one another, the Deoband has also associated itself with sectarian unity groups the Milli Yakjehti Council. However given the prominence and support provided to the sectarian groups by the scholarly leadership of the Deoband, it seems as if the unification projects are merely a front to deflate criticism that the Deoband fans sectarian hatred. The Deoband always considers itself to be a movement for the protection of the honor of the Prophet and the Sahaba. It follows that sectarianism is a logical corollary of the protection of Islam in a biopolitical age. Communalism and sectarianism are both species of the biopolitical caesura.

⁴¹⁹ Formerly known as Anjuman-e-Sipah-i Sahaba, it is now a defunct group, having been declared a terrorist organization by President Pervez Musharraf in 2002. Azam Tariq was assassinated on October 4, 2003 near Islamabad, in an attack widely blamed on Shi'a militants. Azam Tariq was a key figure in the in Pakistan's bloody history of sectarianism, which peaked during the years of operation of the SSP. Over 2000 sectarian murders have occurred since 1989. For a detailed account of the assassination see *Newsline October 2003*.

⁴²⁰ The group was named in honor of Haq Nawaz Jhangawi who was assassinated in a bomb attack on 23 February, 1990. Sectarian violence reached its peak during the years following Jhangawi's murder, which the SSP blamed on Shi'a landlords and the Iranian Government. Prominent Shi'a scholars were targeted in the wake of Jhangawi's murder, as well as Sadiq Ganji.

⁴²¹ According to a *Newsline* report of the time, this criminal who was wanted in over 250 cases, including the 1988 murder of Iranian Council General to Pakistan, Sadiq Ganji, was actually arrested a few months prior to May, and the encounter was staged for fear that the ISI would engineer his escape. Extra-judicial murders as many police encounters became known, became a common way for the governmental to deal with 'terrorists elements' and 'social misfits', and should also be seen as the expression of sovereign power of the state and police. Also according to establishment insider, Hassan Abbass, a low level ISI operative

the *Tahrik-i Difa Sahaba* (Movement for the defense of the *Sahaba*, Companion of the Prophet) and the *Tahrik-i Khuddam Ahl-i Sunnat*.

Organizations working against the Barelwi are less prominent and include the *Jami 'at Asha 'at-o-Tauhid-o-Sunnah*, founded by Maulana Ziaullah Shah Bukhari in 1949, and the *Jami 'at Ahl-i Sunnat*. Organizations that campaign against the Ahmadi (Qadianis) however were among the first to form, all in 1949. These include the *Aalmi Majlis-i Khatm-i Nubuwwat* founded by Maulana Khan Muhammad, the *Tahrik-i Tahafuz Khatm-i Nubuwwat* founded by Sayyid Maheen Bukhari and the *Pasban-e-Khatm-i Nubuwwat* founded by Allama Mumtaz Awan. While these names are not well known, the various *Khatm-i Nubuwwat* groups were the first to be founded and received strong support from all of the main Sunni groups, from Mawdudi's Jama'at-i Islami, to the Barelwi. It is the one cause around which even progressives like Allama Iqbal have gravitated. The Ahmadi are thus the exclusive cipher of bare life for all Sunni Islamist parties.

In addition to these sectarian sub-groups which began to further multiply and proliferate in the 1980's, the Deoband has also spawned over a dozen jihadist outfits that work in Kashmir and Afghanistan,⁴²² and functioned as the more or less explicit tools of the ISI's 'foreign policy', until 2001. Today the Pakistan Army itself essentially one

from the Pakistan Air Force named Athar was the accomplice in murder of Ganji. See Abbass, *Pakistan's Drift into Extremism: Allah, the Army, and America's War on Terror*.

⁴²² Each of the Sunni Islamists groups and not only the Deoband, have jihadists offshoots. One of the most effective jihadist outfits is the Hizb-ul Mujahideen (HM, the Mujahideen Party), the militant wing of the Jama'at-i Islami (JI). HM was formed at the behest of the ISI in September 1989. Given Mawdudi's long history of opposition to the claim of jihad in Kashmir by the Pakistan Army, the formation of this wing can be seen as contrary to its organizations founders spirit. Qazi Hussain Ahmad, Mawdudi's successor however was drawn into the sovereign game like everyone else, and the JI also benefited from the slush funds and street prestige that the Afghan and Kashmir jihads procured. As the parent of all major jihadists groups, the ISI also uses the militant wings of the mainstream political groups to control the political parties themselves.

faction within the larger jihadist apparatus. In addition to the Taliban, these Deoband groups include; the Harkat-ul Jihad-al-Islami (HuJI, Movement of Islamic Jihad, or Islamic Struggle Movement) which was the first to be formed at the onset of the Afghan war in 1980; its offshoot the Harkat-ul Mujahideen (HuM, Movement of the Islamic Mujahideen⁴²³) founded in 1983 and led by Maulana Fazlur Rehman Khalil⁴²⁴; the Jaish-i Muhammad (JeM, The Army of Muhammad⁴²⁵) founded by former General Secretary of the HuM Maulana Masood Azhar in 2000; and the Lashkar-i Tayeba⁴²⁶ (Let, Army of the Righteous, or Army of the Pure) just to name a few. Harkat-ul Jihad-al-Islami was founded by three Deoband seminary students, Qari Saifullah Akhtar, Maulana Irshad Ahmad and Maulana Abdus Samad Sial.⁴²⁷ Mufti Nizamuddin Shamzai, who was a regular Friday *khutba* speaker at Jami‘a Faruqiyya where I conducted the bulk of my research, was a close advisor of Masood Azhar, and extended his scholarly patronage to the activities of the JeM. The formation of the JeM was opposed by many members of the Harkat-ul Mujahideen, who wanted to preserve a united Kashmir jihad front. The monthly mouthpiece of the Harkat-ul Mujahideen, *Sada-e-Mujahid*, routinely featured articles critical of Azhar’s breakaway faction, and critiqued scholars like Ludhianawi and

⁴²³ Formerly known as Harkat-ul Ansar, and not to be confused with Hizb-ul Mujahideen, Harkat-ul Ansar was declared a terrorist organization in 1997 by the US due to its association with Saudi terrorist Osama bin Laden. To avoid the repercussions of the US ban, the group relabeled itself the Harkat-ul Mujahideen in 1998.

⁴²⁴ Khalil was also one of the founders of the HuJI, but broke off to found the Harkat-ul Ansar.

⁴²⁵ The Jaish-e-Muhammad (JeM) was launched by Masood Azhar from Karachi on January 31, 2000, following his release from an Indian jail. The ‘release’ occurred after the ISI negotiated a “hostage” swap following the December 31, 1999, hijacking of an Indian Airliner.

⁴²⁶ Currently under the leadership of Hafiz Muhammad Saeed, and now known as Jama‘at-ud-Da‘wah, LeT is widely regarded to be behind the recent November 2008 Mumbai carnage. Saeed was a one time appointee to the Council on Islamic Ideology during the regime of General Muhammad Zia ul-Haq. Taiba from *Tayyab* (pure) is also commonly transliterated as *Tayyaba*, *Tayyiba*, *Taiba* or *Toiba*.

⁴²⁷ According to one source the group began under the name of Jami‘at Ansarul Afghaneen (JAA, the Party of the Friends of the Afghan People), and was later rechristened the Harkat-ul-Jihad-al-Islami, to designate its broader inclusion of the Kashmir front. For further details on all these jihadist groups see *The South Asian Terrorism Portal* (<http://www.satp.org>).

Nizamuddin Shamzai for double talk and supporting of the new JeM. The fact that both these scholars were assassinated seems to point towards internal factionalism as the cause.⁴²⁸ The logic of the jihad is not confined to Islam as Baudrillard suggests. Instead what we are dealing with is a proliferation of the jihadists apparatus that came into being under the sovereign alignment of 1979. As the Pakistan Army today battles the very jihadist elements it has carefully nurtured since 1980, what we see in Pakistan is the generalization of a *dispositif*⁴²⁹ in which security and terrorism form a ‘single deadly system, in which they justify and legitimate each other’s actions’.⁴³⁰ As Agamben’s brief essay on security insightfully suggests ‘terrorism’ is simply the reverse side of the security *dispositif*, an inverse and more concentrated reflection of the sovereign power deployed by the state.⁴³¹ Terrorism is therefore merely the excrement of civilization and modern governmentality.

Returning now to the *Khatm-i Nubuwwat* groups, the Tahrik-i Tahafuz-e-Khatm-i Nubuwwat, was effectively the *tabligh* arm of the banned Majlis-e-Ahrar-i Islam,⁴³² whose famous slogan “Long live the rule of God, Death to Democracy” (*hukumat-i illahiyya*) and their opposition to the Pakistan movement, led to over a decade of

⁴²⁸ The recent split between the major Deoband madaris, Faruqiyya and Dar-ul ‘Ulum, discussed in Chap. 6, can also be seen as a reflection of the division between scholars who support and are willing to work with the governmental in their efforts against the multi faceted Tehreek-e-Taliban, and those groups like the HeM and the LeT that oppose the Pakistan government.

⁴²⁹ It is important for us to keep in mind that Foucault’s use of the term *dispositif*, apparatus, continues the spatial thematic already embedded in Heidegger’s conception of *Gestell* (enframing, enframe, meaning a certain structural encapsulation).

⁴³⁰ See Oliver Marchart, "The Other Side of Order: Towards a Political Theory of Terror and Dislocation," *Parallax* 9 (2003).

⁴³¹ Agamben, Giorgio, *On Security and Terror* “...discipline wants to produce order, security wants to regulate disorder. ... Nothing is more important than a revision of the concept of security as basic principle of state politics. European and American politicians finally have to consider the catastrophic consequences of uncritical general use of this figure of thought. It is not that democracies should cease to defend themselves: but maybe the time has come to work towards the prevention of disorder and catastrophe, not merely towards their control. On the contrary, we can say that politics secretly works towards the production of emergencies.”

⁴³² Rafi Usmani, *Akeedah-I-Khatm-E-Nabuwat* (Lahore: Bait-ul-Uloom, 1996).

suspension in the early years of Pakistan. In many ways it was their underground philosophy that had a decisive influence on the sovereign aims and objectives of the Pakistani Deoband more broadly. If the legal political parties worked within the ambit of Parliamentary democracy, their dark side, the Ahrar nurtured contempt for it. One might even say that the Taliban and the various radical jihadist outfits today are the re-emergent face of the Ahrar. According to G. H. Khan, the Ahrar was set up in Lahore in 1929⁴³³ at the suggestion of Maulana ‘Abul Kalam Azad, as a mechanism to weaken the unity of the Pakistan movement. The “Majlis-i Ahrar-i Islam-i Hind” was led by the anti-Ahmadi Deoband ‘alim Maulana Syed Attaullah Shah Bukhari who was elected as the Ahrar’s first President.⁴³⁴ As The Munir report states; “One of the main activities of the Ahrar was their opposition, in one form or another, of the Ahmadis. It may indeed be said that the Ahrar took their birth in the hatred of the Ahmadis.”⁴³⁵ It was the Ahrar’s post-Khilafat movement (1919-1924) campaign of the 30’s that seriously transformed relations between the broader Ahmadiyya community and orthodox Sunnis. From the beginning then as the opposition to the Ahmadi (both the Lahori and Qadiani groups) migrated from the realm of *kalam* to the political, the strategy of the ‘ulama has been one of sovereign power. As Jalal notes, Janbaz Mirza, the prolific historian of the Ahrar sect gives special place to the Ahrar campaign against the Ahmadi’s.⁴³⁶ Initial Ahrar policies broadly reflected the early Deoband ‘ulama’s opposition, under the leadership of Madani, to Jinnah and the Muslim League. The Ahrar leadership called Pakistan “*Palidistan*”.

⁴³³ The *Munir Report* states that the Majlis-i Ahrar-i Islam, a party of nationalist Muslims, was formed in a meeting held in Lahore on 4th May 1931.

⁴³⁴ G. H. Khan, *Freedom Movement in Kashmir, 1931-1940*, 1st ed. (New Delhi: Light & Life Publishers, 1980), p. 205.

⁴³⁵ Munir Report, p. 12.

⁴³⁶ Ayesha Jalal, *Self and Sovereignty: Individual and Community in South Asian Islam since 1850* (New York: Routledge, 2000), p. 295.

However as the possibilities of power under an exclusively Islamic/Muslim State began to take shape, factions within the Ahrar, along with figures like Shabbir ‘Usmani and Ashraf ‘Ali Thanawi, promised to declare support for Pakistan if Jinnah would guarantee that “Qur’anic laws would be enforced.”⁴³⁷ Given the Ahrar’s influence Jinnah is alleged to have made numerous statements to leading clerics like Thanawi and ‘Usmani that Pakistan’s laws would be in conformity with the spirit of Islam. As late as 1945 the Punjab Muslim League declared that when Pakistan would be achieved “the administration would be carried out according to the Qur’an”⁴³⁸ The Ahrar manifesto reads as follows:

God is the only source of strength. The oneness of God, the acceptance of Muhammad (PBUH) as the last and final prophet and following the example of the *Sunnah* and the Companions of the Prophet is our creed. The establishment of *Khilafat*,⁴³⁹ *Shura*⁴⁴⁰ and *Ijma’a-e-Ummat*,⁴⁴¹ is our politics. Our system of finance is *Zakat*, *Ushr* and *Jazia-o-ikhraj*. The word of God above all, the spread of Islam through Jihad is our destiny. Our goal is to please God and the Last Prophet.⁴⁴²

While the “manifesto” is ambiguous, this forms the ideological template for all Deoband groups, a *hukumat-i illahiyya* (Government of God). And though it leaves room for a series of differential tactics as to how this “political system” will be established, the driving force of the various movements cannot so simply be placed at the feet of such an ideological mandate. The *Jama’at* (gathering), I would suggest, is itself a response to the gathering call of *Gestell*.

⁴³⁷ *Secret Punjab Police Abstract of Intelligence*, quoted in *Ibid.*, p. 448. See also the section in Chapter 6 *Fatwa-e Pakistan*.

⁴³⁸ *Secret Punjab Police Abstract of Intelligence*, quoted in *Ibid.*, p. 449.

⁴³⁹ Institutionalized form of temporal and spiritual authority over the entire umma.

⁴⁴⁰ A Islamic consultation assembly, or Council of Islamic Elders, that advise the khalifa.

⁴⁴¹ Assembly of Community of the Prophet.

⁴⁴² Usmani, *Akeedah-I-Khatm-E-Nabuwat*.

Biopolitical caesuras are essentially mobile, and in each case they isolate a further zone in the biological continuum, a zone which corresponds to a process of increasing *Entwürdigung* and degradation. Thus the non-Aryan passes into the Jew, the Jew into the deportee, the deportee into the prisoner (*Haftling*), until biopolitical caesuras reach their final limit in the camp. This limit is the *Muselmann*.⁴⁴³

Pakistan it could be said is the unfolding of this degradation; the homeland of the *Muselmann*.

The Sovereign Strategy: Apostasy & Khatm-i Nubuwwat

The problem of heresy has played out in post-colonial Pakistan as a historico-political dialectic of defining, producing, defending and defiling Muslims, a dialectic which as I mentioned above, originates not with the ‘ulama but with the Pakistan movement itself. Heresy must therefore be understood not only in terms of its juridical registers, but more importantly in its biopolitical functionality. One of the Deoband’s self-proclaimed major socio-political achievements was the legislative and religious exorcism of the Ahmadiyya from the broader Muslim community in Pakistan. The attempts by this contradictory class of religio-political scholars to politicize, and eventually dominate the process of defining the boundaries of ‘Muslimness’, must be understood through a consideration of several key contextualizations, both meta-colonial and metacolonial. With these contextualizations in place, one can talk about ways in which modernist Islamic politics draw upon and deploy the symbolic weight of what is popularly marked as traditional, authentic discourse, to create new forms of political space and to exercise new forms of disciplinary and sovereign power. The politicization

⁴⁴³ Agamben, *Remnants of Auschwitz : The Witness and the Archive*.

of the definition of Muslimhood⁴⁴⁴ during the 1953 ‘anti-Ahmadi disturbances’ in Lahore, —disturbances which led to the downfall of the Punjab Provincial government under Mian Mumtaz Muhammad Khan Daultana,⁴⁴⁵ and were one of the major pretexts for the declaration of a brief spell Martial Law in Lahore in March of 1953 — was the first indication of what mobilized violence marshaled around an excluded minority could achieve. If the biopolitical movement of Pakistan began as minority movement bent on the exclusion of a Hindu majority, the second movement post-1947 reflects the mirror inverse of the same logic. That is to say the ‘secular’ biopolitical logic of Jinnah’s Pakistan (homeland for Muslims) is inversely reflected in the ‘theological’ logic of the Deoband ‘ulama (homeland for Islam). The exclusion of minorities begins with the targeted focus on the Ahmadiyya. This was of course a process that ultimately led to the juridical embodiment of a series of discriminatory and exclusionary constitutional amendments and ordinances in 1974 and 1984, known as the blasphemy laws.

At the forefront of the assault on ‘apostates’ and heretics in Pakistan, driven in the main by anti-Ahmadiyya sentiment, were the various *Khatm-i Nubuwwat* (finality of the prophet) movements which have their political origins in the Majlis-e-Ahrar. Since their inception in Pakistan they have been organized and run by a series of well respected Deoband ‘alims, including such recent luminaries as Maulana Muhammad Yusuf Ludhianawi who was affiliated with the now notorious Banuri Town madrasa. Karachi’s Taliban Central, the Jami’at al-‘Ulum al-Islamiyya, as the Banuri madrasa is formally known, was founded by Sayyid Muhammad Yusuf Banuri (1908 –1978). Already in 1994, it was linked with key players in the rise of the Taliban. Mullah Omar was an imam

⁴⁴⁴ In Agamben’s terms; the attempt to decide on Muslimness in terms of a fact.

⁴⁴⁵ Which led to the landmark Munir Report. See below.

at the Banuri masjid for a short period before 1994. One of its senior ‘ulama Mufti Nizamuddin Shamzai was apparently the go between for Osama bin Laden and Mullah Omar. The fiery Maulana Masood Azhar, was also a graduate of Banuri Town. Since then senior ‘ulama associated with the mosque have been routinely assassinated. In November 1997 Habibullah Mukhtar, the president of the madrasa was gunned down with several of his associates⁴⁴⁶. In May 2000 Muhammad Yusuf Ludhianawi was assassinated,⁴⁴⁷ followed in May 2004 by the targeted killing of Ludhianawi’s successor Mufti Nizamuddin Shamzai.⁴⁴⁸ In the same year, September 11 2005, Shamzai’s successor Mufti Jamil was also killed in Karachi.⁴⁴⁹

Prior to partition as President of the new breakaway faction of the JUH, the All India Jam‘iyyat al-‘Ulama-i Islam, Shabbir Ahmad ‘Usmani, on behalf of the Ahrar had declared not only that the Ahmadis were apostates but that they could also be given a death sentence.⁴⁵⁰ Following partition AIJUI was renamed the Markazi Jam‘iyyat al-‘Ulama-i Islam (MJUI)⁴⁵¹ and it played a lead role along with the underground Ahrar in the activities of Tahrik-i Tahafuz-e-Khatm-i Nubuwwat (KN). The early hierarchy of the KN included all the early heavy weights; Sayyid Sulayman Nadwi, Mufti Shafi Muhammad, Mufti Muhammad Hasan (1880-1961), Maulana Muhammad ‘Ali Jalandhari (d. 1971), and Maulana Ghulam Ghaus Hazarvi (1885-1981). One of the key demands of the KN was that “Qadianis” be declared a non-Muslim minority and that all Ahmadi’s be

⁴⁴⁶ *Dawn*, November 3-8, 1997.

⁴⁴⁷ Ludhianawi had a significant popular following because of his weekly Friday Islamic Q&A section in *Jang*. Huge protests followed in the wake of his assassination. See *News* May 19, 2000.

⁴⁴⁸ *Daily News*, May 31 2004.

⁴⁴⁹ *Daily News*, September 11, 2005. See also the reports in *Dawn*, *News* and *Jang*. Months earlier, June 24 2005, Mufti Rehman and Maulana Irshad, senior ‘ulama at the Banuri Mosque, were also wacked.

⁴⁵⁰ *Fatwa-al-Shihab*

⁴⁵¹ Later Markaz was dropped and it simply became the JUI.

removed from governmental posts including Jinnah's Foreign Minister Chaudhuri Muhammad Zafarullah Khan (1893 - 1985). Liaquat 'Ali Khan's refusal to remove Khan from his post was in part the pretext for the Ahrar mobilization in 1953.⁴⁵² After the disturbances had subsided martial law was withdrawn, and the Constituent Assembly of Pakistan passed a special Act to constitute a Court of Inquiry to investigate the "causes" of disturbances that led to the imposition of martial law. The landmark report, which has come to be known as the Munir Report,⁴⁵³ was produced in April 1954 and is a historians treasure trove. The report is a formidable investigation and offers a visionary forecast of the fate of the country if 'ambiguous laws' were allowed to enter the constitutional framework.⁴⁵⁴

The committee examined the viewpoints of all leading 'ulama in the country at that time. It seemed as if the 'ulama could agree on nothing other than the belief that Ahmadi's were *kafirs* (disbelievers) and that anyone becoming an Ahmadi was an apostate (*murtid*) and liable to the death penalty. What was also apparent is that beyond this exception, no positive definition of what constitutes a Muslim could be agreed upon.⁴⁵⁵ This is a most significant fact for our metacolonial thesis. Additionally the

⁴⁵² The Munir Report emphatically blames activists of the Ahrar, acting as fronts for the mainstream 'ulama, for the violent nature of the events. From the Munir Report: "The disturbances were the direct result of the rejection by Khwaja Nazim-ud-Din, the then Prime Minister of Pakistan, of an ultimatum delivered to him in Karachi on 21st January 1953 by a deputation of the ulama who had been authorized to do so by the Majlis-i Amal constituted by the All-Pakistan Muslim Parties Convention held in Karachi from 16th to 18th January 1953. The ultimatum was to the effect that if within a month the Qadiani Ahmadis were not declared a non-Muslim minority and Chaudhri Zafrullah Khan, the Foreign Minister who is an Ahmadi and other Ahmadis occupying key posts in the State, not removed from their offices, the Majlis-i Amal would resort to direct action (*rast iqdam*)."

⁴⁵³ Fully: "Report of the court of inquiry constituted under the Punjab Act II of 1954 to enquire into the Punjab disturbances of 1953."

⁴⁵⁴ The report includes 2600 pages of evidence, 339 documents, hundreds of letters, and a host of books, pamphlets, journals, and newspapers.

⁴⁵⁵ "Keeping in view the several definitions given by the ulama, need we make any comment except that no two learned divines are agreed on this fundamental. If we attempt our own definition as each learned divine has done and that definition differs from that given by all others, we unanimously go out of the fold of

leaders of the various sects stated that they could not stand one another and routinely called each other *kafirs*. The Barelwi ‘ulama held the Deobandis and Wahhabis were beyond the pale of Islam also potentially murtid. According to a fatwa of the Deobandis, the Shi‘a are all *kafirs* and *murtad* for not respecting and recognizing the caliphate of Abu Bakr and the *Sahaba*. (Companions)

“The net result of all this is that neither Shi’a nor Sunnis nor Deobandis nor Ahl-i Hadith nor Barelwis are Muslims and any change from one view to the other must be accompanied in an Islamic State with the penalty of death if the Government of the State is in the hands of the party which considers the other party to be kafirs. And it does not require much imagination to judge of the consequences of this doctrine when it is remembered that no two ulama have agreed before us as to the definition of a Muslim.⁴⁵⁶

Effectively today we see the *metastatic* unfolding of the apostasy *dispositif*, a tool designed initially to target Ahmadi’s and Shi‘a. The cancer is now endemic, with Pakistan effectively having declared itself an apostate nation.

The Honor of Apostasy

In his *Tahafut-al-Falasifah*, al-Ghazali is careful to distinguish between apostasy (*murtaddun*) and heresy (*bid‘at*, change or innovation)⁴⁵⁷ which can be of varying degree’s. Not all *bid‘at* constitute acts of apostasy. The nuances of medieval jurisprudence however are largely lost on the Deoband ‘ulama, who selectively apply their own rulings on apostasy so as fashion the laws into a practical weapon. According to the classical tradition, when a born or converted Muslim becomes a new *kafir*, (*kufir*

Islam. And if we adopt the definition given by any one of the ulama, we remain Muslims according to the view of that alim but kafirs according to the definition of every one else.” (*Munir Report*, p. 218)

⁴⁵⁶ *Munir Report*, p. 220

⁴⁵⁷ Majid Fakhry, *A History of Islamic Philosophy*, 2nd ed., Studies in Oriental Culture (New York: Columbia University Press, 1983), p. 223.

tari’) he becomes a *murtid* and is exposed to the death penalty. The verdict in the annals of medieval jurisprudence that the punishment for apostasy and blasphemy is death would be near impossible to refute.⁴⁵⁸ As the Deoband trained scholar, Dr. Muhammad Asrar Madani writes in his booklet on blasphemy and apostasy, “the defense of Islam and the honor and dignity of the Prophet are the religious obligations of Muslims, from which there is no excuse.”⁴⁵⁹ Apostasy for Madani includes, “abandoning or forsaking Islam; repudiating any of Islam’s basic and principal tenets; reverting to the former state of falsehood from the absolute Truth of Islam or converting to any other religion ... proclaiming prophethood for oneself or believing in an impostor as a prophet after the last Prophet of Allah, Muhammad (SWAT) and indulging in any deeds or uttering something that leads to *kufir* (disbelief).”⁴⁶⁰ From this catch all definition he concludes: “It is clear from the above meanings of apostasy that all blasphemers, mockers, Jews, Christians, their friends, associates and sympathizers, polytheists, atheists, and half-hearted Muslims, non-believers in the Oneness of Allah and His Absolute Lordship and in all His prophets whose chain ends with the last Prophet Muhammad, are *kafirs* and apostates ... The punishment for apostasy is death but if the person repents sincerely, then the death sentence can be lifted and the person forgiven.” Madani’s book/pamphlet is an extended series of selective quotations from the Qur’an, Hadith and Sunnah which support of this argument. At the close of his work, he approvingly cites a Hadith, ironically from the Shi’a tradition of Imam Muhammad Baqir and Imam Ja’far as-Sadiq: “If any Muslim turns away from Islam and disbelieves in that which was sent down to the Prophet Muhammad or undermines his personality, denies his prophethood, or accuses

⁴⁵⁸ See Friedman, and Madani.

⁴⁵⁹ Mohammad Asrar Madani, *Verdict on Blasphemy and Apostasy* (Lahore: Idara-e-Islamiat, 1994), p. 129.

⁴⁶⁰ Ibid., p. 130.

him of lying, other Muslims who hear such blasphemy and apostasy are duty-bound to kill the guilty person as soon as they are able to do so. ... It is incumbent on the present imam of the Muslims to execute him and accept no apology from him.”⁴⁶¹ Since both Christians, Hindus and Ahmadi’s could be said to equally deny the finality of the prophet, the issue in question is not punishment for a denial of this belief, which would then require the state to murder, as Madani suggests, all Christians and non-believers, “unless they repent.” This would be impractical, which is why the specific laws for punishment are against blasphemy, which does not target a born kafir, who *prima facie* disputes the validity of Islam and the status of the Prophet. Rather what is punished is the offense of blasphemy which is based on the perception of an “insult” or “harm” to Islam and the Prophet (*Ghustakh-e-Rasool*). Blasphemy thus, in contrast to general *kufir* (disbelief), can be committed by either a Muslim or *kafir*. However it is precisely this ambiguous zone between apostasy and blasphemy which the Deoband have adroitly exploited. The definitions of what constitutes an act of heresy, blasphemy and apostasy, are ambiguous and bleed into one another. Since blasphemy constitutes an act of insult against the Prophet, or a public denial of his virtue or Prophetic status as the Last of the Messengers of God, blasphemy is an act that can technically encapsulate Muslims and non-Muslims alike⁴⁶². Since the Ahmadiyya community believe that Ghulam Ahmad Mirza (1835–1908) of Qadian was a prophet (albeit one who did not bring a new law or a new book), for most orthodox Sunni’s and Shi’a this would constitute a denial of the ‘finality’ or Prophet Muhammad. Thus technically the very definition of Ahmadi belief falls under

⁴⁶¹ Ironically Asrar Madani, who has a *Fazil* degree from Dar al-‘Ulum Deoband, also has a PhD in Early Arabic Poetry from the University of Glasgow in Scotland, and has chosen to reside in the land of the *kufar*, Canada!

⁴⁶² For instance a Church service declaring Christ the Son of God, would technically constitute an act of blasphemy against Islam.

the category of ‘insult’ and denial. The strategy of the Deoband has thus been two fold; to excommunicate the Ahmadi’s by officially declaring them non-Muslims (*kafir*) while simultaneously constituting their every day beliefs and practices as blasphemous acts, rendering them a permanent class of *homo sacer*. It would be sufficient to draw an Ahmadi into an open debate, or to utter the *kalima*, or read the Qur’an, to place charges of blasphemy against him.

Given that the many deaths pertaining to the blasphemy laws have been carried out not by the state but by mob violence, demonstrates that the sovereign element of this law, the right to take life, is most directly exercised by the ‘ulama. Despite the fact that no one has yet been officially executed by the state, hundreds of people have been harassed and killed, including non-Ahmadi’s, and dozens still languish in prison awaiting the juridical process⁴⁶³. Acts of mob violence on the other hand have led to dozens of lynchings. It is these lynchings that produce a series of violent affects that sustain a quasi sovereign status for the ‘ulama; the right to declare the exception and kill the *exceptio*. Thus within Pakistan the Ahmadi’s have had to suffer persecution not only through courts of law, but also at the hands of prejudice by some of their fellow Muslims.⁴⁶⁴

It was in 1974, during the tenure of Zulfikar ‘Ali Bhutto, in an effort to appease the religious right, that the Ahmadi’s were declared by a constitutional amendment to be a non-Muslim minority. Bhutto was also facing civil unrest of the kind that was fomented

⁴⁶³ According the Human Rights Commission of Pakistan between 1994-1996, 94 Ahmadi were killed by sectarian mobs. Over 70 have been murderously assaulted, 38 places of worship were either burnt, damaged or forcibly occupied, 15 graves were desecrated and 26 burials of members of the community were either prevented, or the rites disrupted. Cited in *Newsline* (December 2000).

⁴⁶⁴ For a sad, but excellent account of the travesties perpetrated against the Ahmadiyya in Pakistan see Yohanan Friedmann, *Prophecy Continuous: Aspects of Ahmedi Thought*, vol. 3, Comparative Studies on Muslim Societies (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1989).

in 1952,⁴⁶⁵ unrest that was fomented by the thuggish wings of the JUI, the Tahaffuz-i Khatm-i Nubuwwat. Bhutto had wanted to defer to the matter of the Ahmadi's to the Council of Islamic Ideology, but Mufti Mahmood led the demand for an immediate constitutional amendment. Other Islamist parties smelling blood and a point of weakness, joined the fray against Bhutto, including Mian Tufail the second amir of the Jama'at-i Islami. The matter was taken to the National Assembly and subsequently a Second Amendment to the 1973 Constitution was passed in September of 1974.⁴⁶⁶ The state was now like a Pope, in the business of excommunication, directly contradicting the principle of religious freedom and the avowedly secular ethic of Jinnah. However the ruling was consistent with the Objectives Resolution which hovered over the constitution like a sovereign ghost, both simultaneously in and outside of the law. With the formal folding of the Objectives Resolution within the constitutional framework in 1985, a long sought after goal of the Deoband was achieved. The state was now constitutionally bound to ensure that no law of the state was repugnant to Islam. What had been a rather vague imperative was now a legal article. However what had been introduced under the cover of the Objectives Resolution, and formally incorporated into the legal system, is a system of dual and competing sovereignty. If the constitution were a personality it would now be diagnosed with multiple schizophrenia. Pakistan's personality disorder is violently

⁴⁶⁵ On May 22, a group of 160 students from Peshawar boarded a train to Multan. As they stopped in Rabwah, the predominantly Ahmadi town and spiritual headquarters of the Ahmadiyya community, they began hurling insults at the locals. As the train returned from Multan, it stopped again in Rabwah, and this time a group of Ahmadi's had formed to counter the students. An altercation with knives and sticks ensued which led to thirty serious injuries. Disturbances followed in the wake of the governments failure to meet demands by agitators to crack down on Ahmadi's in the government. Sporadic violence against Ahmadi homes and properties ensued and a countrywide general strike took place in June. (*Dawn News*, May-July, 1973). Though media reports of the time do not confirm this, it is likely that the students from Peshawar were affiliates of the Khatm-i Nubuwwat.

⁴⁶⁶ Clause (3), added to Article 260 which defines a non-Muslim, expands a general definition to include See Hamid Khan, *Constitutional and Political History of Pakistan* (Karachi & New York: Oxford University Press, 2001), p. 297.

apparent today, as the country verges on the brink of an expansion of an already ongoing de facto civil war in the NWFP and FATA regions.

A decade following the 1974 act of excommunication, the war against the Ahmadi escalated from a theological rebuke to a matter of criminality. Under Zia ul-Haq, the anti-Ahmadi Ordinance XX was introduced into the Pakistani criminal code in 1984. Under article 298c⁴⁶⁷ introduced by the ordinance, Ahmadi's could be criminally charged if caught "impersonating" a Muslim, with a possible sentence of up to three years. However the decisive shift occurred under the democratically elected regime of Nawaz Sharif,⁴⁶⁸ who introduced the notorious blasphemy laws in 1993. The penalty for insulting the Prophet, and if the SSP had their way the Companions of the Prophet,⁴⁶⁹ now carried the death penalty, and a case could be filed without the need for an FIR. The law made it a capital offense for Ahmadi's to publicly recite the *Shahada* or read the

⁴⁶⁷ The offences prescribed for religious offences have been provided in Sections 295, 295a, 295b, 295c, 296, 297, 298, 298a, 298b and 298c of the Pakistan Penal Code. Section 295 was originally a hold over from the introduction of a blasphemy clause introduced by the British in the colonial era. In 1990, the Federal Shariat Court declared the death sentence as mandatory for any blasphemy against the Holy Prophet. Originally article 298c only stipulated a prison penalty for those caught 'posing' as Muslims, aka the Ahmadiyya. Later in 1993, section 295c was added, covering the crime of blasphemy against the Prophet, with its stipulation of the death penalty. Section 295c of the Pakistan Penal Code (Blasphemy Act) imposes the death penalty on anyone found to have "by words or visible representation or by an imputation or insinuation, directly or indirectly, defiled the name of the Prophet Muhammad of Islam". Additionally any one accused of blaspheming against the Quran would also be awarded life imprisonment under the same section of the Blasphemy Act. See appendix A.

⁴⁶⁸ It has recently been alleged that Nawaz Sharif's 1990 election campaign was in part sponsored by both the ISI and Osama in Laden (*Daily Times*, Thursday, June 23, 2005), and represented a return of the military after a 'democratic' Benazir Bhutto hiatus. The more radical elements of his IJI (Islamic Democratic Alliance) coalition were demanding the implementation of Islamic finance which included a ban on interest. Since this would have resulted in the collapse of Pakistan's finance and banking sector, Sharif allowed the introduction of those aspects of the 'ulama demands which would not upset his economic standing with the ruling class of Pakistan. The blasphemy laws seemed like a fair concession to Sharif, but it was perhaps the final crack in the constitutional walls which allowed 'ulama sovereign to spiral out of control.

⁴⁶⁹ Such a law would target Shi'a's who generally show a disregard for the three caliphs (*Sahaba*, Companions), Abu Bakr, Usman and Omar, for usurping 'Ali's leadership.

Qur'an.⁴⁷⁰ Khomeini's 1989 fatwa against Rushdie was also playing itself out in the background, and was perhaps a major impetus behind the shift. The task was now easy, since the Ahmadi denial of the finality of the prophet could be folded under the charge of blasphemy.

While the exemplary focus of such violence in Pakistan has been on the Ahmadi community, the real target of these laws are not simply members of the Ahmadi, Christian or Shi'a minority (even if such excluded populations bear the brunt of the violence) but the entire body politic itself. While the blasphemy laws have certainly been directed with more viciousness at messianic tendencies within Islam (Ahmadi, Shi'a), that is to say those that might challenge the validity of the Deoband as guardians of the law, the 'ulama deployment of the laws of apostasy must principally be seen as a sovereign, rather than a juridical strategy; a strategy which as we shall see in the final chapter is deployed against the Deoband 'ulama themselves.

Veteran journalist I. A. Rahman has long documented the sad chronology of persecution facilitated under the new climate of 295c. One of the more prominent cases was that of the 13 year old boy Salamat Masih. On May 11, 1993 the case of the Christian brothers Salamat, Rehmat and Manzoor Masih made international headlines and was the cause for significant embarrassment worldwide. The case against the Masih boys was based on an allegation that they had written sacrilegious slogans on a wall, and

⁴⁷⁰ In 1997, the landlord of the house my family was then residing at, suddenly passed away. Nasrullah sahib was a good friend of my fathers. The Defense Housing Society's Sultan Masjid was a stone throw away from our house, and my father went to the mosque to procure *siparas* (individually printed chapters of the Qur'an which are recited during the wake ceremony. It is customary at a funeral wake for relatives and friends to complete a reading of the Qur'an). When the imam asked my father who had died, he told him that it was our landlord. The imam knew that Nasrullah was an Ahmadi and refused to loan the *siparas*. Later the imam told my father that if he had done so a blasphemy case could have been filed against him and my father.

they were booked under Sections 295a and 295c of the Penal Code. During trial it turned out that two of the brothers were illiterate and could not write. Despite this they were sentenced to death by a Sessions Judge on February 9, 1995.⁴⁷¹ Due to severe international pressure, the Lahore High Court, acquitted Salamat Masih and Rehmat Masih of blasphemy charges on February 22, 1995, and the boys were subsequently exiled to Canada for fear that the ‘Ulama would arrange for their extra-judicial murder. The case and the manner of its unfolding however sent shivers down the Christian community in Pakistan who realized that they were now permanent *homo sacer*.⁴⁷² Prior to the arrest of the Masihs two persons had already been sentenced to death, one Christian the other Muslim. Both men suffered harsh conditions in jail, and during their trials remained under the threat of lynching by the zealous crowds that would gather at the court proceedings. The court events were turned into regular spectacles reminiscent of the crowds gathering around the scaffolds of Paris during the *Ancien régime*. The ‘ulama used each event as an opportunity to display the potential of their power over life. Furthermore in all of these cases the force that comes to bear on the subject (on the Ahmadi, or the Shi‘a) is directed against her very life and lifestyle, rather than particular acts. This represents a transition of ‘ulama power from a more pastoral and disciplinary mode to a biopolitical and sovereign one.

On May 5th 1998, John Joseph, a Roman Catholic Bishop from Faisalabad, who had long crusaded against the country's growing religious fundamentalism, intolerance and the discriminatory laws against minorities, committed an act of public suicide reminiscent of the June 11, 1963 political suicide of the Mahayana Buddhist monk Thich

⁴⁷¹ *Newsline* (May 1993)

⁴⁷² The members of one Masih community fled their homes and were turned into refugees in their own homeland.

Quang Duc in Saigon, a self-immolation now immortalized in Malcom Brown's Pulitzer prize winning photograph. Bishop Joseph shot himself in front the sessions court in Sahiwal in protest against the court's decision to award the death sentence to another Christian Ayub Masih on the charge of blasphemy. The Bishop and the Monk, sacrificing their bodies in protest against new violent and imperial structures. The homology between Islamism and America could not be more complete.

The Sovereign Space of Blasphemy

If we take briefly into consideration the declining regard of the 'ulama in postcolonial Pakistan⁴⁷³ then we can understand both the affective and socio-economic factors that facilitated their turn towards a strategy of power and authority that can be described as sovereign rather than juridical. The 'ulama's new sovereign strategy revolves around the production of boundaries and a space of obedience. As DeCaroli notes, "the work of sovereignty precedes the law ... the sovereign field precedes and enables the judicial decision. This decision—a legal decision that is readily obeyed—must have a territory to which it is applied. Not a neutral space, but a space that is capable of being obedient."⁴⁷⁴ Additionally the ability to exercise the authority to define the boundaries of Muslimness and therefore of inclusion and exclusion, which is itself a necessary condition for the declaration of banishment (declaring who is in, *momin* and

⁴⁷³ Enshrined in the early chapters of nationalist memory was the hostility of the majority of the 'ulama (of the Ahrar and the JUH) to Jinnah and the Muslim League. For many 'ulama what could not be countenanced was the hijacking of Islam by the Pakistan movement. This memory has since been erased by Zia's revisionist orthodoxy. See Khursheed Kamal Aziz, *The Murder of History in Pakistan* (Lahore: Vanguard Press, 1998).

⁴⁷⁴ Steven DeCaroli, "Boundary Stones: Giorgio Agamben and the Field of Sovereignty " in *Giorgio Agamben: Sovereignty and Life*, ed. Matthew Calarco and Steven DeCaroli (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 2007).

who is out, *kufaar*) relies on the capacity for the violent enforcement of these boundaries rather than on a capacity for juridical reasoning. In this way the production of a space of exception and violent spatial affect go hand in hand. Hence ‘ulama authority is tied to the presence of and establishment of boundaries which are themselves maintained by acts of violence. That this power is exercised by rival faction of Deoband jihadists against each other, let alone their Shi‘a and Barelwi adversaries comes as no surprise.

From a structural point of view, the effective deracination of the Ahmadi, their excommunication from the fold of the ummah, can be seen as a way of stripping them of their “Muslim” citizenship. This state sanctioned act of exclusion from the domain of Islam, should be seen as a parallel move to the denationalization of Jews under the Nuremberg Laws. Both were preludes to the production of *homo sacer* and hence can be regarded as a malleable juridical apparatus for sovereign power. The declaration of the Muslim as infidel (*murtid*), and the invocation of *jahiliyyah* (‘the state of ignorance’) is also of course the time honored strategy of all jihadist groups who seek to deploy their mythic violence against fellow Muslims. This is the general meaning of the biopolitical sovereign strategy of the ‘ulama, the assumption of the authority to decide when it is permissible to harm those who are *haram*. The political power to declare the borders of the *umma-gination*, between inside and outside, inclusion and exclusion, thus defines the basic logic of ‘ulama sovereignty. This is not a territorial logic but a juridico-political one. This sovereign logic is concerned not with the law itself, with ethics or with the illegal, but with the boundary between the legal and the non-legal. This between, or *zone of indistinction*, “appears as the legal form of what cannot have legal form”,⁴⁷⁵ a “no-

⁴⁷⁵ Agamben, *State of Exception*.

man's-land between public law and political fact ... between the juridical order and life.”⁴⁷⁶ Effectively then the juridification of the shari‘a is marked by this collapse of the political and the juridical, and as shari‘a is understood as corresponding to the structure of canonized law.

The biopolitical significance of the state of exception “as the original structure in which law encompasses living beings by means of its own suspension” therefore emerges not only paradigmatically in military orders, whether by Bush, Musharraf or Hitler, but also through the fatwa, which is itself transformed from an opinion on the path of ethical life, to a sovereign command. The exemplary case of the fatwa as a sovereign command was of course Khomeini’s 1989 declaration of Rushdie as apostate. The act was designed of course to shore up power for Khomeini. Agamben’s description of *homo sacer* could very well be a perfect description of Rushdie’s life following the fatwa;

... his entire existence is reduced to a bare life stripped of every right by virtue of the fact that anyone can kill him without committing homicide; he can save himself only in perpetual flight or a foreign land. And yet he is in a continuous relationship with the power that banished him precisely insofar as he is at every instant exposed to an unconditioned threat of death. He is pure *zoē*, but his *zoē* is as such caught in the sovereign ban and must reckon with it at every moment finding the best way to elude or deceive it.⁴⁷⁷

Thus what is at stake in the power of the ban, in the maintenance of a “torturable” subject (pace Dick Cheney), or the apostate as *homo sacer*, is not the application of the law to a crime, or the determination of the illicit from the licit, but the creation of the very grounds of sovereign power and rule. And as we have seen in the previous chapter, this “space devoid of law” is “so essential to the juridical order that it must seek in every way

⁴⁷⁶ Ibid.

⁴⁷⁷ ———, *Homo Sacer: Sovereign Power and Bare Life*.

to assure itself a relation with it.”⁴⁷⁸ The Deoband and Taliban’s recourse to the notion that they are simply executing the shari‘a, is therefore a strategy of (self) misdirection, one that both sanctifies their drive for absolute sovereign authority over territory and bodies, and obscures the connection between sovereignty and the capture of bare life within their juridico-political orbit.

With the example of the next section we can see how the Deoband ‘ulama have deployed these juridical and affective technologies, specifically injunctions against blasphemy and apostasy, to carve out the boundaries and the form of an Islamic body (ummah) over which they can exercise greater forms of sovereign authority and control. The case specifically highlights not only the tensions, contradictions and imbrications between competing forms of sovereign power over the space of the political in Pakistan, but also the ways in which such sovereign powers overlap and resonate. Specifically we are talking of the mullah-military complex.

Heretics of the Modern

Contemporary global understandings remain attuned to historical narratives that naturalize a particular, territorially oriented view of sovereignty, reinforce it with a political economy story that disparages precommercial systems of livelihood and exchange, and substitutes myths of evolutionary development for histories of violent confrontation and usurpation.⁴⁷⁹

Territory is no doubt a geographical notion, but it is first of all a juridico-political one: the area controlled by a certain kind of power.⁴⁸⁰

⁴⁷⁸ ———, *State of Exception*.

⁴⁷⁹ Michael J. Shapiro, *Violent Cartographies: Mapping Cultures of War* (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 1997).

⁴⁸⁰ Foucault in Jeremy W. Crampton and Stuart Elden, eds., *Space, Knowledge and Power: Foucault and Geography* (Ashgate Publishing Co., 2007).

Blasphemy is about many things but central to its articulations is the concept of boundaries, and limits (or *hudud* in Arabic). The ‘ulama’s juridification of the shari‘a facilitates their role in the marking of social boundaries and limits (*hudood*), and the corresponding exercise of the exception through banning and exclusion. By articulating the boundaries of Muslimness, the ‘ulama are able to constitute the ummah; Muslim *People* are produced through the deployments of specific biopolitical relationships and a distinctive logic of exclusion.

What I am interested in here is the grammar of blasphemy and how its corresponding notion of the heretic, the apostate, the *murtid*, function, across a range borders and different spaces; appearing here as the *jihadist*, the fanatic, the Islamist, the suicide bomber, and there as the kafir, apostate and *murtid*. We should ask then, what does blasphemy look like when it is mirrored in spaces marked either as secular or religious (tradition/modern, secular/profane). I would suggest that the more general process of exclusion, and legitimized violence against the excluded, shows up on a number of horizons in addition to the more recognizable framework of ‘heresy’. This would include for instance the question of ‘national security’ which itself took the form of heresy in the United States during the McCarthy era. For some years after 911, and in many sub-cultures of the United States, being Muslim was tantamount to prophesying a heresy against the religion of the United States.⁴⁸¹

As Edward Said has taught (some of) us so well, imperial formations are sustained and imbricated within culture. In a recent fit of Huntingtonian rage, and quite reminiscent of the liberal excoriations directed against British Muslims during the

⁴⁸¹ One could recall numerous media instances; when North Carolina University required its incoming freshman class to read Michael Sell’s *Approaching the Qur’an*, Fox News’ mullah O’Reilly was outraged and demanded to know why students were forced to read “the book of our enemy?”

Rushdie affair, David Brooks, conservative ‘alim, of the NYT, draws banal yet emotively sharp demarcations between the West/Us/US and its constituent other, Muslim protestors/Islam/Them. Brooks writes “*We* in the West,⁴⁸² were born into a world that reflects the legacy of Socrates and the agora. In *our* world ... *Our* mind-set is progressive and rational. Your mind-set is pre-Enlightenment and mythological. In your worldview, history doesn't move forward through gradual understanding. In your worldview, history is resolved during the apocalyptic conflict”⁴⁸³ Of course one could comment endlessly on the magnitude of rank stupidities embedded in this piece, but I bring up his op-ed up not because it is one more variant of Islamophobia, but rather what interests me here is the notion that pious, secular and political Muslims (Islamists) alike, belong not just to another incommensurable civilization but belong outside of time. They are thus at best medieval specters, but certainly they are modernities heretics. Brooks, in a variation of a fatwa that is endlessly reproduced in the media, was effectively laying out both spatial and temporal boundaries of the West, in order to facilitate the production of “*abombable*”⁴⁸⁴ spaces. Similarly, the editors of the Zionist magazine Forward, in response to Cartoongate write: “Suddenly, that old sense of shared European-American culture and values, so quaintly archaic just a year ago, seems more alive than ever.” In best selling author Robert Kaplan’s heroic portrait of American Empire he writes about the Muslim World as the new Wild West: “‘Welcome to Injun Country’ was the refrain I heard from troops from Colombia to the Philippines, including Afghanistan and Iraq....

⁴⁸² And I am afraid that even those Muslims living in the “US” and speaking very good English, are for neocons like Brooks, at best liminal moderns, that is, in the West but yet not of it.

⁴⁸³ David Brooks, “Drafting Hitler”, *New York Times*, Feb 6, 2006. Emphasis mine.

⁴⁸⁴ Short for abominable and bomb-able!

The War on Terrorism was really about taming the frontier.”⁴⁸⁵ The violence of such renewed Orientalist discourses thus collapses the distinctions of temporality and space between Iraqis and Iroquis, folding the two points into a newly constituted moral geography whose newly fashioned juridico-political boundary is subject to policing and the exercise of exceptional Imperial power.

The 20th century elaboration of American Empire, especially in its relationship to Saudi Arabia, Palestine, Iran and more recently Iraq and Afghanistan, map out what Derek Gregory has called a colonial present, an ongoing and profound imperial perimeter of power.⁴⁸⁶ This element of the colonial present corresponds with the ontic elaboration of the meta-colonial. The Pakistani State has itself, clearly fallen under the ambit of a specifically American grand geopolitical strategy, in ways structurally analogous perhaps to the relationship between autonomous Indian Princely States and Colonial Britain after 1857.⁴⁸⁷ It is thus not surprising that academic discourses on Pakistan have historically been dominated by “security” and political science studies. Additionally the vast corpus of otherwise insightful theorizing and sometime brilliant works that have emerged from within the field of postcolonial studies, are of limited provenance for understanding and evaluating Pakistan’s specific political career (as compared to India), especially when such paradigms privilege the colonial effects of the past while occluding a neo-imperial or colonial present.⁴⁸⁸ However we might wish to label this current imperial relationship,

⁴⁸⁵ Kaplan, Robert, *Imperial Grunts: The American Military on the Ground*.

⁴⁸⁶ Gregory, *The Colonial Present: Afghanistan, Palestine, Iraq*.

⁴⁸⁷ Citizen-subjects of the Pakistani nation state in relationship to Washington, their colonality, so to speak, can be said to have structural analogies with metropole/colony relationship prior to 1947

⁴⁸⁸ It should be noted that the terms Empire and Imperialism (with or without the qualifiers “new” or “neo”) are not being invoked as rigid or monovocal designators. I am mindful of the ways in which the applicability of these terms is fraught with its own challenges, in particular for accurately distinguishing aspects of difference and continuity from the colonial and imperial orders of the past. In this sense, given a host of international institutions (IMF, World Bank, NATO, US Military Bases, etc) which have effectively

whose primary modality of engagement has been through the cultivation of military networks, it is necessary to register the concrete and transformative effects of institutions of global power which intersect, interdict and are otherwise ineluctably imbricated with local “Pakistani” sovereignties. This is not to suggest that a fully determined and wholly constituted set of singular constraints and possibilities are determined by this neo-colonial relationship. But it does allude to the substantial transformative effects on the political, cultural and affective cartography of the region, effects that have Empire as one of its more significant conditions of possibility. By going beyond the paradigm of Pakistan’s postcolonial condition, the metacolonial aims to highlight a haunting by an intertwined metaphysical and colonial present. This formulation is designed not only to disturb the agency of Pakistan, and question the scope and effect of its supposed territorial sovereignty, but also to problematize the ascription of certain narratives of history (whether in the trope of ‘crisis’ or ‘success’) as ‘belong to’ or ‘being of’ something called “Pakistan” in the first place. That is to say Pakistan should not be understood in isolation from the wider network of imbricated politics, communications, ideas and economy. Conventional histories of Pakistan and its subject-citizens have become part of what Said has termed an “imaginative geography,” where distance from the imperial center is narrated as difference through a series of spatializations. What conventional narratives that seek to uncover or reveal aspects of the “history of Pakistan” occlude are the concrete and material imperial effects on such ‘autonomous’ spaces, spaces which are in

continued to extend and exacerbate, spheres of inequality and uneven distributions of wealth and power, by means both overt and subtle, it makes little sense to talk of a uniform spaces of “postcoloniality” in either Asia, Latin America or Africa, let alone the Middle East. Broadly speaking however we understand the term Imperial, to designate the contemporary use and exercise of American military and economic power, ideologically infused with strains of neoconservative and American nationalist purpose, in the broader service of neoliberalism; that is a global system of political economy which extends the sovereignty of the market into all arenas of life.

effect subjected to disciplining and control within the wider politico-juridical landscape of Empire. And if both empire and capital themselves, from the vantage of the metacolonial, are symptomatic of yet another emergency, then the crisis of Pakistan should be viewed not as an anomalous divergence from the path of a proper political development, but merely one more, albeit rather bloody and precarious shade of the political itself.

In this section then, I will attempt to suture the historical ruptures through which a series of boundaries and spatialized difference are established, spatializations that are central to the constitution of both otherness and the ‘architecture of enmity’.⁴⁸⁹ The seemingly oppositional politics of Empire and Islam, America and Pakistan, are instead only appositional; mutually constitutive and increasingly reliant on each other for the production of boundaries and affect, sentiments that in turn animate calls for violent and coercive political action. In relation to the broad assemblage and complex global networks of colossal power that goes under the term Empire, one needs to be mindful of the ways in which Islamist revolutionary fantasies becomes the basis for further Imperial desire and the doctrine of legitimacy of a new manifest destiny for the 21st century. A very local element of this tension is currently being played out between the Pakistan Army and the Taliban. What I am concerned with is negotiating a passage around multiple layers of imbricated policing functions. I am attempting to find a language that lies beyond Islamist Fantasies on the one hand and Imperial Desires on the other. As such my concern implicitly, and more broadly, is with the figure of the “Muslim” as a subject of, and as subject to, a variety of political, juridical, theoretical and historico-political

⁴⁸⁹ The phrase is Gregory’s

discourses. My aim is to pry open the space for developing a language of critique and terms of understanding that refuse the universalizing hegemony of both liberal-secular, and Islamist discourses of modernity.

A Tale of Two Shaikh's

Writing from within the dark solitary confines of his dungeon, a hapless prisoner makes an impassioned plea to his fellow nationals: "I am a victim of the abuse of Section 295-C of the Pakistan Penal Code" wrote Dr. Younas M. Shaikh, from his Adyala Jail cell in Rawalpindi. "There was no definite evidence against me, still there was much religious pressure and so the mullaism [sic] and the abuse of religion got me here. I hope American war against religious terrorism [sic] will also affect the religious terrorism of codified law in Pakistan as well as its abuse in the administration of justice."⁴⁹⁰

Like all good tales about the Muslim world these days, this one too is suffused with reference to that most famous date in history, so famous that one need not even specify the year. Younas M. Shaikh's plea was penned, on October 12, 2001. However even through the thickness of his jail's dank walls, reverberating from beyond the Khyber Pass to his West, Younas could not but have failed to hear the booming chatter of daisy cutters, furiously uprooting the weeds of religious terror, to make way for more fertile, possibly liberal democratic pastures. In the coming months, another Shaikh Muhammad, Khalid Shaikh Muhammad, mastermind of the infamous event, the event when time and anti-time collided, and hundreds of heretics, blasphemers and assorted evil-doers like him, were soon to find themselves in similar dark cells, in lands far, far away, arrested

⁴⁹⁰ "Blasphemy - My Journey through Hell", statement by Dr. M. Younus Shaikh (www.iheu.org. Accessed January 12th 2006).

without warrant, held indefinitely, in places unknown, with secret evidence if any at all arrayed against them. As we know now the code name for these penal black holes is “Bright Light”, suggesting of course the liminal passageway on the edge of death.

Returning to our first Shaikh, Dr. Younas, then a 45 year old Pakistani medical professor, had been arrested without warrant a year earlier by the Islamabad police in October of 2000, and was booked under Pakistan’s blasphemy laws. The son of a local merchant, with impeccable religious credentials, a Hafiz-i Qur’an no less, Shaikh had studied medicine in Pakistan and in Ireland, and at the time of his arrest he was working part time at a small clinic and teaching at a Homeopathic Medical College in Islamabad. Earlier, in 1992, Dr. Shaikh, single-handedly, inaugurated “The Enlightenment” in Pakistan, an organization committed to “rationalist and democratic principles” which advocated the “principles of liberalism, secularism and humanism.” Above all Shaikh’s enlightenment group argued for separation of state and religion. The blasphemy accusation against him was based on a few statement, which he allegedly made in one of his lectures while answering questions about the state of hygienic practices during the time of the Prophet Muhammad. He allegedly had insisted that the practice of shaving hair under the armpit was a modern invention, and not observed by the Prophet and his contemporaries. Additionally he had stated the obvious that Muhammad’s parents were not Muslims because they died before Islam existed. These allegedly ‘hair raising’ responses became the basis for an FIR, a criminal complaint under Section 295-C of the penal code. The complain was filed by Maulana Abdur Rafoof, an Islamabad based mullah affiliated with the *Majlis-i Tahafuz-e-Khatm-i Nubuwwat*. The *Khatm-i Nubuwwat* organization thus effectively functions as anti-heretical harassment wing of

the Deoband ‘ulama political party (JUI). The alleged informer, a student of Dr. Shaikh’s, who was also linked with the anti-Ahmadi anti-Shi‘a, Khatm-e Nubuwwat movement, had himself not personally attended Dr. Shaikh’s lecture when the alleged blasphemy had occurred. The case of heresy was hence drafted almost entirely on hearsay.⁴⁹¹

According to Pakistan’s blasphemy laws, police can arrest an accused without obtaining a warrant of a judicial magistrate or filling an FIR (First Information Report). After his arrest, Dr. Shaikh was kept for fifteen days in police custody, and denied bail. There were reports that his reading glasses were broken, leaving him in a state of helplessness. Throughout his ordeal, he had no lawyer, since most of the lawyers in Pakistan don’t dare to appear in blasphemy cases for fear of becoming target of fundamentalists rage themselves. In the court room, at his first hearing, an aggressive group of some twenty clerics of the Deoband’s *Majlis-i Tahafuz-e-Khatm-i Nubuwwat* exerted pressure on the legal proceedings by appealing to religious sentiment. This form of what I will call “*taqwa*”⁴⁹² politics, has become the standard procedure at such legal proceedings. As a sovereign tactic *taqwa* politics is designed to induce a fear of Islam among the population and bears little resemblance to the ethical meaning of *taqwa*. Although no body of crime was established nor was any substantive material evidence offered by the prosecution, Younas was pronounced guilty on 18th August 2001, fined Rs.100,000, and sentenced to death. In many ways the victims of these proceedings can be seen as judicial sacrifices offered to the clergy. In Pakistan, blasphemy-accused are not only facing a potential death penalty, but even while in jail, they are in danger of

⁴⁹¹ The parallels with the recent witch hunts at Columbia University spearheaded under the ominous David Project should be obvious. David Project is an organization dedicated, much like the *Tehreek-e-Difa Sahaba* which is itself a ‘propaganda’ countering organization, to silencing of any critique the State of Israel in its exercise of sovereign power over its own *homo sacer* constituent; the Palestinians.

⁴⁹² Piety, induced in part through the fear of God.

being beaten or killed by prison guards or fellow inmates. If acquitted, they face the further possibility of vigilante justice. Since the mid-1980's when the blasphemy laws went on the books, hundreds of cases have been filled, and though no one has yet been awarded capital punishment, a few hundred individuals still languish in prison, and several incidents have resulted in the murder of alleged blasphemers, in some cases even before any legal proceedings went into play.⁴⁹³

“For the next two years, I was held in solitary confinement in a very small death cell in the Central Jail, Rawalpindi, a dark and dirty death cell with unbearable, stinking and distasteful food. There was no facility for walking or exercise, and I was without books, newspapers, medication or treatment for my worsening diabetes. I remained constantly under threat of murder by Islamic fundamentalist inmates themselves in jail for murder and gang rape, or by some religiously-minded prison warden.”⁴⁹⁴ Subsequent to an appeal, Younas Shaikh, forced to defend himself by secretly smuggling law books into his death cell, was eventually acquitted on November 2003. His lamentable three year long nightmare ended up in forced exile in Switzerland.⁴⁹⁵

Up until now my account of this witch hunt, which like the case of suicide bombers, and the exploits of jihadism in general, should produce the familiar forms of liberal discomfort if not revulsion. They both seemingly represent an implacable eruption of religious fanaticism, that simply does not belong in “our liberal-secular humanist space-time.” But there is one critical element of Dr. Younas Shaikh's plight that I have omitted, and in covering this omission I am hoping to slide in one of my main methodological agendas, namely that we shift our gaze from the grotesque, from the

⁴⁹³ I document one such tragic case in the next chapter.

⁴⁹⁴ “Blasphemy - My Journey through Hell”, statement by Dr. M. Younus Shaikh.

⁴⁹⁵ One is forced to conclude that he was not given a fair shake by the Pakistani juridical system.

register of politics as morality, to the register of the political understood as both discourse and concrete material relationships of power.

Younas was also a strong public advocate of people-people relationships between South Asian nations, and specifically was critical of the Pakistani militaries abuse of the Kashmir problem: the ways in which it fostered a wedge between Pakistanis and Indians, and facilitated the construction of an enemy, which in turn fueled the logic of military rule. On 1st October 2001, Younas attended a meeting of the South Asian Union in Islamabad to discuss Pakistani-India Relations and Nuclear War. At the meeting he expressed the view that Pakistan and India should agree, that in the interest of the people of Kashmir, that the present line of demarcation should become an official line of peace line: the international border between the two countries. He also criticized the armies use of “freedom fighters” known elsewhere as terrorists – as a political instrument in Kashmir. Following Younas’ talk, Shaukat Qadir, a Brigadier from the ISI, threatened Younas and said that he would “crush the heads of those who think and talk like that”.⁴⁹⁶ A few days after this, Younas was summoned to the principals office, fired without cause, and as he left the office was arrested by police. His first act of heresy, thus was thus against the dominant power structure of the Pakistani nation state, the military and its shadowy intelligence agency the ISI.

My deliberate conjuncture of the case of Younas M. Khalid, the Pakistani blasphemer, with Khalid Sheikh Muhammad the Pakistani born Kuwaiti terrorist, is to suggest a kind of homology, not equivalence, between both types of heresy. The body of the blasphemer has traditionally been the cite for spectacular forms of disciplinary

⁴⁹⁶ Quoted in Ardeshir Cowasjee “In the name of the law”, *Dawn*, March 14, 2004.

punishment and juridical excess, and specifically the use of torture (or the threat of mutilation and death) was designed to extract confessions. There are disturbing parallels with the CIA's use of water boarding and indefinite solitary confinement, to produce the what I will call the *Dershowitzian* confession, and the forms of punishment and confessional extraction deployed during the Salem witch trials. Both forms of apostasy involve the denial and defilement of the symbols of sovereignty. What I seek to highlight however is the manner in which the two figures are constructed as fully biopolitical subjects, subjects who possess dangerous and socially destructive forms of knowledge, and on whose bodies then, a subsequent host of disciplinary and governmental rationalities are allowed to unfold.

***Taqwa* Politics and the Publics Fear**

During the US financed and politically supported dictatorship of General Zia ul-Haq (1977 – 1987), the Deoband were able to achieve two of their self-proclaimed major socio-political goals: the legislative and religious exorcism of the Ahmadiyya from the broader Muslim community in Pakistan, and the codification of blasphemy laws, under the ambit of a wider *shariatization* of the judicial framework. Placed within the context of the 'ulama's paradoxical relationship to the modern post-colonial nation state, the anti-Ahmadiyya movement was one of the first steps towards what is improperly but widely understood as the “radical fundamentalism” or “Talibanization” of the Deoband. Talibanization is simply the logical fruition of the violent unfolding of a sovereign logic. I would argue that an understanding of the radicalization of the 'ulama and its militant

policing of the boundaries of Islam, must be set within a series of postcolonial, meta-colonial and metacolonial contexts. The easiest to identify is of course the later, in particular the repressive and regressive role of the State: namely the state's 'general'⁴⁹⁷ legitimization of the use of violence, intimidation and coercion as the means for political participation and negotiation. The postcolonial context refers to the more complex process by which the textual tradition of an urbanized 'ulama were politically privileged over and above the more widespread and dominant forms of 'folk' Islam and Sufi order. In this way the 'ulama were elevated as the authentic representatives of the "Muslim community." However with the decapitation of Muslim (Mughal) sovereignty the 'ulama suffered a historical decline of their role, prestige and regard under colonial, and subsequently postcolonial modernity. The metacolonial context which is the principle burden of this work, needs a more careful elaboration. This metacolonial context is mirrored in the attempts by the 'ulama, to politicize, and eventually dominate the process of defining the boundaries of Muslimness. This is but one mode of empowerment by the 'ulama, who have deployed the symbolic and sentimental weight of Islam, to push for the juridical enshrinement of blasphemy, thereby advancing their claims of political leadership and power over and above both civil society and the sovereign authority of the state. This otherwise marginal community of Islamic orthodoxy, has thus able to transform itself from mere subjects of *daw'a* and *tabligh*, to agents of jihad and political power.

Modern 'ulama politics can thus be seen as drawing upon and deploying the symbolic weight of what is popularly marked as traditional, authentic discourse, to create

⁴⁹⁷ pun intended!

new forms of political space and to exercise new forms of disciplinary power and authority within the ambit of larger more powerful sovereign orbits (the state, the empire). Additionally they engage in what I call “*taqwa*” politics. *Taqwa* is literally piety with resonances of a fear of the awesomeness of God. What is celebrated in *taqwa* politics however is the awesomeness of the ‘ulama, a sovereign strategy that translates piety to mean a fear of the ‘ulama. The military of course practices its own brand of *taqwa* politics. Thus *taqwa* politics is very much a politics which creates its reservoir of effects and affect through the cultivations of a “publics fear” within the public sphere. Since representation and display are central to strategies of power, the ‘ulama often choose public sites—court proceedings, women’s bodies and billboards—as spectacles and markers of their display of power. The production of the *homo sacer* is the ultimate form of this power.

My primary suggestion however is that Islamic ‘theologians’, in particular those who advocate dwelling in political space, do not deploy something like *taqwa* politics as a conscious strategy of power. Rather their political practice represents a deeper alienation from the ontological ground of their own language. This is not a problem of misunderstanding on the part of the ‘ulama nor a transition in the formal structure of knowledge, one induced say by a change in the referential body of Islamic knowledges taught at a madrasa. Rather it is a transition in the very ‘epistemological unconscious’ or historical *a priori*, which arises as a result of the proliferation of the space of the political. The transition of ‘ulama practice and ethics can be seen as a transition from the exercise of discipline to that of control, with the rationale for the exercise of sovereign power firmly anchored in a biopolitical understanding of the ummah.

From the *Order of Things* to *Discipline and Punish*, one of Foucault's aims has always been to show that the basis of what we think today, the entire order of existing things, is radically different from that of the classical thinkers. Epistemic transformations, or discourses as he later called them, were ruptures that fundamentally reconfigure not only what kinds of things can become the objects of knowledge, but also the way in which these objects are configured within the new worldview. The task of a genealogy of Islam would be to trace these shifts. The epistemic re-configuration thus concerns the realm of power [*savoir*], and is eventually articulated in relation to the wider set of institutional and political developments within which Islam is put to work, mobilized and deployed, ways that are increasingly aimed at the salvation of the *socius*—the biopolitical body—rather than the soul.

The movement of the Deoband into sovereign biopolitical space, their crossing of a spatial threshold, is a shift that was consummated in the Taliban's capture and deployment of State power. It constitutes an sovereign shift in that it *re-replaces* Deoband authority by investing the 'ulama with a form of power that is grounded in the ultimate right of the sovereign to take life, to execute, to take the decision on life and death. Today the only victory the Deoband (loudly) celebrates, is the victory over bodies, not souls. It is marked by the burst of the Kalashnikov rather than a meditation on the voice. The demand for the shari'a as the preeminent law of the land, is thus not an ethical demand, it is a demand of sovereign power, since fatwa prescriptions will now have the force of law.

It is the technologized relationship to being embedded in the modern political that results in the 'ulama grasping Islam ontically rather than ontologically. It is not then Islam per se that is technologized but rather the framework of understanding, the

enframing grasp of modern man, which is a covering of being, and of being's withdrawal. We are dealing hence not with a direct case of 'ulama obsession for power but rather their possession by power (*Gestell*). Political Islam is therefore Islam's historical destiny rather than a perversion of some original essence or a contradictory manifestation of a medieval spirit. Today the Pakistani Deoband's every political gesture is stamped by this will to power, whereas in India it is marked by the will to survive.⁴⁹⁸ This comportment towards sovereign power betrays its opposition to the ethical, where the ethical is conceived as that which pertains to being. 'Ulama practice is now only a competing form of governance over life and the body, through the enforcement, rather than enjoining of shari'a; a shari'a which is understood in terms of modern canonical law, and is thus today bereft of its onto-ethico possibilities.

The Objectives Revolution and the Coup de 'Ulama

At its birth Pakistan was still effectively framed under a colonial constitution. Under the provisions of the Indian Independence Act, 1947, the 1935 Government of India Act, became, with minor adaptations, the de facto working Constitution of Pakistan, and was known as the Pakistan (Provisional Constitution) Order. The colonial apparatus was effectively still in place, from the military to the legal establishment. It seemed only as if the State had been ethnicized. The unresolved problem of sovereignty however would prove calamitous. Today as Dr. Shashi Tharoor Minister of State for External

⁴⁹⁸ Agamben introduces of a third formula between the symmetries of sovereign and biopower may be of interest here: "a formula that defines the most specific trait of twentieth-century biopolitics: no longer either to *make die* or to *make live*, but to make survive. The decisive activity of biopower in our time consists in the production not of life or death, but rather of a mutable and virtually infinite survival. ... Biopower's supreme ambition is to produce, in a human body, the absolute separation of the living being and the speaking being, *zoē* and *bios*, the inhuman and the human – survival." Agamben, *Remnants of Auschwitz : The Witness and the Archive*.

Affairs of India rightly observed: “Most States have an Army. Pakistan is effectively an Army with a State.”⁴⁹⁹

The first major step towards ‘decolonizing’ the inherited Constitution was taken by the Constituent Assembly in March 1949 when it passed a resolution on the ‘Aims and Objects of the Constitution’, subsequently known as the Objectives Resolution. The Objectives Resolution was effectively a blue-print for the new Constitution which was eventually adopted on March 23, 1956.⁵⁰⁰ The Constituent Assembly formed several committees and sub-committees to carry out its task of framing a Constitution. The most important one was the Basic Principles Committee which was appointed on 12 March 1949, after the Objectives Resolution was passed by the Constituent Assembly. The JUI President Shabbir Ahmad ‘Usmani was appointed as one of its members. Its task was to report in accordance with the Objectives Resolution on the main principles of the future Constitution. The Basic Principles Committee submitted its interim report on 7th September 1950, and its final report in December 1952.

The Basic Principles Committee also set up a special committee for ‘Talimaat-i Islamia’ (Islamic Teachings), which consisted of a range of Islamic scholars to advise on matters arising out of the Objectives Resolution. The Deoband had several key players on the Board,⁵⁰¹ and their goal was from the beginning to make the Objectives Resolution a fundamental part of the constitution. The Resolution was effectively a mechanism for usurping the “sovereignty of God.” The Resolution was the subject of substantial controversy and most of the non-Muslim members of the committee wanted the references to the sovereign of God and Islam removed. The Objectives Resolution was in

⁴⁹⁹ Stated on *GPS* with Fareed Zakaria.

⁵⁰⁰ According to the new framework Pakistan was now an “Islamic Republic.”

⁵⁰¹ ‘Usmani, Sayyid Sulaiman Nadwi (1884-1953) and Mufti Muhammad Shafi were members of the Board.

fact the key cipher, or Trojan horse, for the “shariafication” of the law, leading to the Shari‘at Enforcement Act of 1991, and thereby constitutes an under appreciated silent coup. It begins ‘In the name of Allah, the Beneficent, the Merciful’

Whereas sovereignty over the entire universe belongs to God Almighty alone and the *authority which He has delegated to the state of Pakistan through its people* for being exercised within the limits prescribed by Him is a sacred trust; This Constituent Assembly representing the people of Pakistan resolves to frame a constitution for the sovereign independent State of Pakistan; ... Wherein the principles of democracy, freedom, equality, tolerance, and social justice *as enunciated by Islam* shall be fully observed; Wherein the Muslims shall be enabled to order their lives in the individual and collective sphere in accordance with the teachings and requirements of Islam as set out in the Holy Qur’an and the *Sunnah*; Wherein adequate provision shall be made for the minorities freely to profess and practice their religions and develop their cultures; ...⁵⁰²

Much to the chagrin of the Deoband, the Principals committee only recommended adding the Objectives Resolution as a preamble to the constitution.⁵⁰³ There it hovered over the constitutional framework like a sovereign ghost, until 1985 when Zia formally incorporated it into the constitutional machine. The subsequent political haunting of Pakistan is evident to even the most casual observer of Pakistan’s benighted history.

The incorporation of the Objectives Resolution as a substantive part of the Constitution triggered a wave of petitions to Pakistan’s superior courts attempting to invalidate laws on the basis of their “repugnance to Islam”. The power to examine which law or provision was or was not in accordance with Islamic injunctions had since the 1956 constitution been decided either by the superior courts or parliament. Up until 1979, the Objectives Resolution’s provisions for ‘Islamization’ only provided for the setting up of advisory boards (like the Council of Islamic Ideology) that would advise on the matter

⁵⁰² For the full document see Appendix. Emphasis mine.

⁵⁰³ The agitation’s of 1953 were also in response to this.

of conformity of laws. None of the recommendations of the advisory board carried the force of law. However in 1980 Zia ul-Haq established by *fiat* of the Provisional Constitutional Order, the Federal Shari‘at Court as a parallel legal body to the superior courts which he did not fully trust. Initially the court appointees were handpicked political allies, but not ‘ulama. Later however three ‘ulama were required to be on a Bench of five judges. The parallel Federal Shari‘at Court was now set up with powers to declare invalid any law or provision of a law deemed repugnant to the injunctions of Islam as laid down in the Holy Qur‘an and the *sunna* of the Holy Prophet. Additionally as Foucault notes in *Discipline and Punish*, power gains its greatest hold on the body and the socius, when it intensifies, multiplies, and extends its realms of application. The Shari‘at Court thus effectively paved way for the ‘ulama to capture an important space within the ambit of state power. The entire state machinery was now constitutionally bound to uphold decisions of these “Islamic” Courts. The establishment of this parallel mechanism to Islamize the legal system independently from parliament stands undeniably as the main contribution of Zia ul-Haq to the “Talibanization” of Pakistan.

Legal historian Martin Lau in his excellent account of the relationship between the judiciary and Islamization, makes the argument that the initial phase of Islamization, up until 1985 when the Objectives Resolution was formally incorporated into the constitution as Article 2-A, was effectively a process led by secular judges rather than the ‘ulama. So long as the clauses relating to keeping the laws of Pakistan in accordance with the Shari‘a lay in the hands of the judges rather than the ‘ulama, a controlled form of Islamization could be used to enhance the power of the judiciary and expand the scope of constitutionally guaranteed fundamental rights. In 1985 however the vague ideological

stipulations of the Objectives regarding the sovereignty of God were drawn into the Constitution. The nebulous outside was now the nebulous inside. This is a rarely commented upon yet landmark event. Lau suggests that this marks a transition within the “Islamization” process, allowing the class of ‘ulama to challenge the up until then judiciary led process of Islamization. Effectively this meant that Islam and its Shari‘a stipulations would no longer be controlled at the level of the state by largely secular, liberal and western trained jurists. Islam could now deployed as a “revolutionary force, which was threatening the state from within the very judicial institution set up to protect it.”⁵⁰⁴

Lau sees this is a more radical phase of Islamization, however our thesis is to the contrary. Rather the Objectives Resolution should be seen as delayed revolution, and marks the attempts by the ‘ulama to give ‘their’ shari‘a modern powers; it marks the complete juridification and modernization of the shari‘a. In Agamben’s terms the shari‘a is now a *constituted* and not merely *constituting* power. Shari‘a transforms fully into its mode of enforcement. The Objectives Revolution, can also be seen as mirroring within constitutional and juridical spheres, the struggle between the Islamists and the All India Muslim League. It is not so much that the anti-Pakistan ‘ulama like the Ahrar opposed the idea of an Islamic State, what they opposed was the idea that the power of Islam was being deployed by lay, secular and elite classes. The struggle therefore at the level of the constitution can be seen to mirror these early political maneuverings which were aimed, albeit unsuccessfully, at wresting the leadership of the Pakistan movement from the secular, landowning elite. Through the Objectives Revolution and its eventual

⁵⁰⁴ Martin Lau, *Role of Islam in the Legal System of Pakistan* (Martinus Nijhoff, 2005), p. 49.

incorporation into the ambit of the state, the subaltern class of ‘ulama have successfully challenged the powers of the liberal intelligentsia for leadership of the very definition of Pakistan. This represent a very substantial coup for the ‘ulama.

Six years after the incorporation of the Objectives Resolution, the Supreme Court observed that:

. . . in our milieu it has given rise to a controversy and a debate which has had no parallel, shaken the very Constitutional foundations of the country, made the express mandatory words of the Constitutional instrument yield to nebulous, undefined, controversial juristic concepts of Islamic *fiqh*. It has enthused individuals, groups and institutions to ignore, subordinate and even strike down at their will the various Articles of the Constitution by a test of what they consider the supreme Divine Law, whose supremacy has been recognized by the Constitution itself.⁵⁰⁵

During the 1949 debates, Maulana Shabbir Ahmad ‘Usmani expressed his views in support the Objectives Resolution by stating that “Islam has never accepted the view that religion is a private affair between man and his creator...” Islam “possess a comprehensive and all-embracing code of life. He then quotes Quaid-e-Azam from a letter he wrote to Gandhi on August, 1944. Jinnah: “The Qur’an is a complete *code of life*. It provides for all matters, religious or social, civil or criminal, military or penal, economic or commercial. It regulates every act, speech and movement from the ceremonies of religion to those of daily life, from the salvation of the soul to the health of the body; from the rights of all to those of such individual, from the punishment here to that in the life to come. Therefore, when I say that the Muslims are a nation, I have in my mind all physical and metaphysical standards and values.” The cipher proper then the real Trojan horse for the rise of Islamist power, are not the ‘ulama, but Jinnah himself.

⁵⁰⁵ Quoted in Ibid.

Force-of-Law and the Law of Force

“Woe to you, men of the law, for you have taken away the key to knowledge: you yourselves have not entered, and you have not let the others who approached enter either.”⁵⁰⁶

Today’s technological exploitation and devastation of nature is a marker of nihilistic mode of comportment towards being, or what Heidegger called *technē*. It is my contention that the comportment of modern Muslims to “Islam”, is similarly structured by the episteme of *technē*, a modality exemplified in the Deoband demand for the “enforcement of shari‘a.”

A genealogy of Islam concerns itself then with the history of this presence, this episteme, and would trace the way in which Islam’s originary ethical potential, the *ēthos* of submission of the will exemplified in certain Sufi practices for instance, is in conflict with the *ēthos* of the modern *polis*, the political, whose essence is the will to power. The deployment of Shari‘a as an instrument of power represents this transition from a will to god, to a will to power. I am not suggesting here that Muslims ought not to have or engage in politics. In fact such a proposition would be impossible for the spaces we inhabit are inescapably political. The proper (authentic) task of politics would be to disclose this space in its coincidence with the exception, as the first task towards a de-linking of law and violence. A genealogy of political Islam concerns itself with disclosing the transition of Islamic *‘ilm* in its relation to power (its *savoir*). The emergence of Islamic subjectivity and the current obsession with Muslim identity (*ethnos*) is

⁵⁰⁶ Cited in Agamben, *Homo Sacer: Sovereign Power and Bare Life*.

inextricably linked to the metastasis of the modern *polis*, whose *topos* (topological structure) Agamben has shown to coincide, like sovereignty, with the state of exception. The crossing of a threshold of indistinction within Muslim society between *auctoritas* and *potestas*, marks this transition to modernity, which under the figure of the Taliban and the Islamic suicide bomber, has reached its catastrophic apogee.

Couched behind the fidelity to the will of God, the (dis)honest claim of merely being followers of an Islamic *logos*, the political violence that drives the campaign for the primacy of the shari‘a (whether at the hands of the Saudi monarchy, Zia ul-Haq, or Mullah Omar) must be seen as the deployment of shari‘a as an instrument of use value which potentially confers authority *and* power (*auctoritas and potestas*) or sovereignty to those in possession of the cipher, or ‘ark’ of shari‘a. This power is itself enabled by the power to issue edicts and proclamations (*fatwa*). In this sense the technologization of Islam is manifest precisely in the transformation of the desire of the fatwa to extend from opinion to something like a force-of-law. Like the liberal assumption of rational objectivity, Islamism is effectively blind to the will to power that undergirds its pious homage to the *gramma* of Islamic law. As this chapter has in part labored to disclose, the ‘ulama interest in the shari‘a as a force of law is most clearly betrayed through their intense efforts to produce the exception. The state of exception Agamben writes “is an anomic space in which what is at stake is a force of law without law (which should therefore be written: force-of-law) Such a “force-of-law” in which potentiality and act are radically separated, is certainly something like a mystical element, or rather a *fictio* by means of which law seeks to annex anomie itself.”⁵⁰⁷ This force-of-law is also revealed in

⁵⁰⁷ ———, *State of Exception*.

the reverence for the jihadists who is a man of pure action. More significantly “the syntagma *force of law* refers in the technical sense not to the law but to those decrees (which, as we indeed say, have the force of law) that the executive power can be authorized to issue in some situations, particularly in the state of exception.” Thus *taqwa* politics also enable the fatwa to be mobilized as force of law, as decree rather than opinion. The ‘ulama then can be seen as interested in deploying the force of law, and in this way their articulation of the shari‘a is an extension or opening of a state of emergency.

Severing this nexus of law and violence — whether it manifests itself in the dynamic of the war on terror, which masquerades as a war for freedom and democracy, the repeated *iustitium* of martial law, or the justifications of violence against society and the bodies of the vulnerable (women, minorities, Ahmadis, Christians and Shi’a in Pakistan) through appeal to heresy (safeguarding the sanctity and honor of Islam/Islam must be defended)— is as Agamben encourages, the central task of a reconstituted political ontology, a path of thinking that attempts to re-think the art of submission (*Gelassenheit*), that seeks the piety of thought. Recognizing the structure of the ban in our political relations and public spaces is key to this objective.

We must learn to recognize this structure of the ban in the political relations and public spaces in which we still live. ... The banishment of sacred life is the sovereign *nomos* that conditions every rule, the originary spatialization that governs and makes possible every localization and every territorialization. And if in modernity life is more and more clearly placed at the center of State politics (which now becomes, in Foucault’s terms, biopolitics), if in our age all citizens can be said, in a specific but extremely real sense, to appear virtually as *hominess sacra*, this is possible only because the relation of ban has constituted the essential structure of sovereign power from the beginning.⁵⁰⁸

⁵⁰⁸ ———, *Homo Sacer: Sovereign Power and Bare Life*.

Summing up then, the primary goal of this chapter was to read ‘ulama’ politics, their arts of government, as having undergone a process of bio-politicization (*technologization*). Broad underlying transformations in the political space of modernity, have in turn effected a shift in the form, target and scope of ulama disciplinary practices, leading to their embrace of new forms, or rather intensities, of political (Islamo-political) rationality and sovereign biopolitics. These transformations must themselves be understood within a complex assemblage (or *dispositif*) of networks of force relations, in which the more specific mode of the governmentalization of the Pakistani State, is set within a larger, but not necessarily all encompassing, system of global sovereignty. The danger signaled by the emergence of radical forms of “political Islam” can then be linked to the gravitation of the ulama towards a toxic combination of biopolitical and sovereign modalities of power.⁵⁰⁹ This dual modality of power is not some ancient Islamic metaphysics working in opposition to the modernizing state, or against globalization as such, but is I suggest, a refraction, albeit through an Islamic discursive prism, of a form of power which is itself the essence of modern sovereign biopolitics. Furthermore I do not regard this new modality of power as a form of what ‘Ali Shari‘ati called “Westoxification”, but it is rather a tendency that has from its earliest inception been inherent within the juridical discourse of the ‘ulama. It is with the emergence of populations and the modern state, and the imposition of colonial sovereignty that (d)effaced the power of Muslim Empires, that these governmental potentialities underwent a transformation of degree, effect, method, target and scope (a transformation

⁵⁰⁹ See Mitchell Dean, *Governing Societies* (Open University Press, 2007).

in threshold). Overall this chapter suggests that we should turn our analytic gaze upon transformations in the *polis* rather than seek to understand and reform Islamic ideology or Islam as such. On a secondary plane, and related to this, I am also arguing strenuously against liberal (especially liberal Muslim) discourse of “modernist reformation”.

Chapter V

The Space of War: Jihad, Body Politics & *Homo Islamicus*

All Muslims are like one body... Wherever the Muslim body is being oppressed it is our duty to support Jihad” – Sami-ul Haq⁵¹⁰

When she spoke of becoming a suicide bomber, Umm Anas’s voice was strong and steady: “This is a gift from God. We were created to become martyrs for God,” she continued, her eyes burning behind the full face veil. “All the Palestinian people were created to fight in God’s name. If we just throw stones at the Jews they get scared. Imagine what happens when body parts fly at them.”⁵¹¹

The *Kafirs* Condemned Body

On 21st April 1994, in a scene reminiscent of Damiens the regicide, whose terrible fate is vividly described in the opening pages of Foucault’s *Discipline and Punish*, an angry mob gathered outside a local police station in the town of Gujranwala in Punjab. Hours earlier the police had taken a local doctor, Hafiz Farooq Sajjad, into custody. The crowd demanded that the police turn over custody of Farooq Sajjad. The mob slowly grew into a crowd of hundreds and began attacking the police post, eventually storming

⁵¹⁰ The Deoband principle of the famous Madrasa Haqqania in Akhora Khattak, and the leader of the JUI-S, Sami-ul-Haq. Quoted in *Dawn News*. Madrasa Haqqania has become the notorious symbol of the militant madrasa, ruining the reputation of hundreds of other deeni madaris that do not have over or direct links with jihadist groups. However it remains well documented that Haqqania is one of the leading madrasa which has supplied jihadist fighters and members of the core leadership for both the Taliban in Afghanistan and jihadist outfits in Kashmir. See Jeffrey Goldberg, ‘Jihad U.: The Education of a Holy Warrior’, *The New York Times Magazine*, 25 June 2000)

⁵¹¹ BBC transcript.

the police lock-up and dragging the already dazed, confused and handcuffed Sajjad into the streets. As he lay bleeding on the ground outside the police station, the crowd pelted him with bricks and stones. Still writhing, elements of the crowd then poured kerosene oil over his body making several attempts to set his body on fire. Eventually the body was tied to a motorbike and dragged through the streets for hours.⁵¹² This was the body of a blasphemer.

What had so enraged the crowds? Investigations of the incident which drew national alarm, and forced Benazir to attempt to introduce amendments to 295c to prevent its obvious and widespread abuse, remain conflicted over the cause. What is known is that Farooq Sajjad was a devout Sunni Muslim, a Hafiz-i Qur'an no less (one who has memorized the Qur'an), and a regular at the local mosque. Additionally he had a diploma in *tibb* (eastern medicine) and an MA in Arabic and Islamic Studies. Sajjad's father was also a well-respected leader of the local chapter of the Jama'at-i Islami. Apparently a call had gone out from a local Deoband mosque that an *atai* (quack) doctor had burned the Qur'an. Since *atai* sounds like *Essai* (the Urdu word for a 'Christian') many people thought that some "Christian" had burned the Qur'an. A large crowd had already gathered for a funeral and somehow descended on the nearby house of Sajjad where he, along with members of his family were beaten up and assaulted. As news of the incident spread the police arrived and took Sajjad away for his own protection. To date no one has been arrested for the murder.

Foucault's *Discipline and Punish* shows us how modernity discovered the body as an instrument of power, and today it is apparent that body is the primary hinge for the

⁵¹² I.A. Rahman, "In the name of Allah", *Newsline* May 1994.

deployment of ‘ulama power. But in what way is this obvious form of disciplinary and sovereign power also simultaneously biopolitical as I have been asserting. For Foucault as we have noted, the term “biopower” indicates the way power, at a certain historical juncture, transforms itself to govern not only individual bodies through a disciplinary processes, but also the body-politick constituted in terms of populations. “The discovery of population is, simultaneous to the discovery of the individual and the trainable (dressable) body, the other great technological node around which the political processes of the West have evolved.”⁵¹³ Whereas discipline was an “anatomo-politics” of individual bodies, designed in part to insert docile bodies into the new capitalist machinery, biopolitics attempts the control of populations in order to govern, secure and control the life of the collective. With the introduction of biopower the ‘social body’ is constituted as an object of government. The new biopower subsumed the older form of sovereign power which was based on the principle “*To make die and to let live*” and exercised as the right to punish and kill. By contrast biopower seeks *to make live and to let die* with its primary objective being the care of life and the biological with regards to its utility for production and efficiency. Biopolitics is thus a network of powers, an apparatus, that is not necessarily stable, or coherent, a collation of practices and knowledges which can give rise to a variable range of subjections and subjectivities.

The deployment then of apostasy as a sovereign mechanism reflects how “the right to punish has been shifted from the vengeance of the sovereign to the defense of society.”⁵¹⁴ In this way the right to punish and kill is always expressed as a “defense of Islam”, as the defense of Islamic society, the ummah body. As Foucault made clear the

⁵¹³ Foucault, *Discipline and Punish: The Birth of the Prison*.

⁵¹⁴ Ibid., p. 90.

various forms of power he described can form daemonic permutations and combinations.⁵¹⁵

The task of genealogy is to provide a cartography, or diagram of such powers. While I have suggested in the previous chapter that the technologies of blasphemy constitute a sovereign strategy on the part of the ‘ulama, correctly speaking what is being made sovereign is Islam itself, and not the ‘ulama per say. It is the defense of Islam in the name of the sovereignty of Islam that is at stake in the exercise of these powers. There is therefore an element of truth to the jihadist claim that he gives his life for Islam. This is why, in answer to Agamben, “a power whose aim is essentially to make live instead exerts an unconditional power of death.”⁵¹⁶

As Foucault elaborates in his 1976 College de France the vehicle which allows thanatopolitics to coincide with biopolitics is racism; that which “allows biopower to mark caesuras in the biological continuum of the human species, thus reintroducing a principle of war into the system of “making live.””⁵¹⁷ Racism is the production of inferiors (infidels) “ways to distinguish different groups inside a population. In short, to stabilize a caesura of a biological type inside a domain that defines itself precisely as biological.”⁵¹⁸ Thus when the sovereign face of biopower is exercised it is almost always on the bodies of those deemed ‘other’. As Foucault describes in *Discipline and Punish*, sovereign power is characterized through its control over the life and death of the bodies of others. Sovereign power subjugates the body, it is a power over the body of the other,

⁵¹⁵ As I have argued in an earlier chapters, Agamben’s problematization of Foucault’s apparent separation of sovereign power and biopower, his argument that the juridico-sovereign and the biopolitical cannot be separated, is premature and rests itself on a weak reading of Foucault’s political ontology

⁵¹⁶ Posed in Agamben, *Remnants of Auschwitz : The Witness and the Archive*.

⁵¹⁷ Ibid.

⁵¹⁸ Foucault, 1997, quoted in Agamben (Ibid.)

and its uses the body as a place, cite and marker for the display of sovereign power. Like the ceremonies of *supplice* that Foucault documents, these acts are spectacular and visual displays of power, that inscribe the marks of the sovereign in prominent places. In the *ancien régime*, gallows, and the corpses of the executed were displayed for several days. The scaffold and torture were exemplary places and technologies for the demonstration and displays of such power. What Agamben adds to this topology of power is the notion of the exception.

Living in the state of exception that has now become the rule has meant also this: our private biological body has become indistinguishable from our body politic, experiences that once used to be called political suddenly were confined to our biological body, and private experiences present themselves all of a sudden outside us as body politic.⁵¹⁹

This serves then as an excellent description of the sovereign biopolitical turn of the ‘ulama, bound up as they have been from the start, with the proliferation of the state of exception. Contrary then to the understanding of liberals⁵²⁰ who see Islam in dire need of a reformation, it is not the rights-bearing free citizen that marks the beginning of the modern age, but the entry of the body into political calculations. We can say that there are three visible forms of the expression of biopolitical sovereignty in Pakistan today; by *Allah (Islam)*, *the Army and Amrika*. In this chapter I shall further elaborate on the meaning of this capture of life and the body by the ‘ulama.

Sexual Somatics

When the juridical (or juridico-spatial) technologies of blasphemy examined in the previous chapter are viewed together with the Deoband ‘ulama’s obsession with

⁵¹⁹ ———, *Means without End: Notes on Politics*.

⁵²⁰ Muslim or secular alike.

sexuality and their violent and coercive attempts at the regulation of bodily norms and practices, we can see that they do not simply constitute the logical corollary of implementing 'timeless' shari'a prescriptions, but rather together formulate a somatics that targets the individual and the collective body. Additionally because the 'ulama view their configurations on the limit of sex and pleasure and their strict gendered division of bodies, as practices of resistance against the West, the link between subjectivity and sexuality which Foucault had already exposed, undergoes a doubling effect. By regarding their sexual politics as forms of resistance to the West (a resistance to western jouissance), the 'ulama collapse the distinction between morality and identity formation. But these somatic and sexual controls, which are regarded as mechanisms that evade the hegemony of Western culture, are themselves nothing more than ways of carving out spaces for the alternative regulation of individual and collective bodies. In this way we may suggest a homology between Foucault's analysis of the "veritable discursive explosion"⁵²¹ of discourses on sex in the Victorian age, discourses which presaged the emergence of the biopolitical subject and the current explosion of discourses on/of Islam, as mechanisms of intensification of the production Muslim subjectivity—*homo Islamicus*. Properly speaking then we are not talking about the re-emergence, or resurgence of Islam, but the emergence of *homo islamicus*, a kind of Muslim humanism with its attendant assertion of a subjectivist metaphysics grounded in the will to power. Sexuality as Foucault writes in the *Will to Knowledge*,

must not be described as a stubborn drive, by nature alien and of necessity disobedient to a power which exhausts itself trying to subdue it and often fails to control it entirely. It appears rather as an especially dense transfer point for relations of power: between men and women, young people and old people, parents and offspring, teachers and students, priests and laity,

⁵²¹ Foucault, *The History of Sexuality: An Introduction*.

an administration and a population. Sexuality is not the most intractable element in power relations, but rather one of those endowed with the greatest instrumentality: useful for the greatest number of maneuvers and capable of serving as a point of support, as a linchpin, for the most varied strategies.⁵²²

The vast emphasis of Islamic cultures on preventing sexual transgression, must thus be situated today within the added context of the truth-event of populations (biopower). Hence the severe social and self-management of the woman's body and her dressage, bespeaks infinitely to the principally biopolitical form of power that Islam and its experts have assumed. The dual deployment of Islam, like the deployment of sexuality "has its reason for being, not in reproducing itself, but in proliferating, innovating, annexing, creating, and penetrating bodies in an increasingly detailed way, and in controlling populations in an increasingly comprehensive way."⁵²³ As Foucault emphasized in *Discipline and Punish*, the body is a principal factor in the political economy of power. The tactics of the body are clearly a disciplinary mechanism of 'ulama power that is perhaps itself quite old, but when expressed as the capacity to defile or punish the body through the *hudud*⁵²⁴ and blasphemy laws, they take on a distinctively dark tone of biopolitical sovereignty. The incredible resistance to any reforms of these laws, speaks to their role as an instrument of power. The increasingly violent and direct targeting of the body (enforcement of the beard, lashing and stoning for adultery, throwing acid on the unveiled faces of women, etc) hence testifies to the diabolical mélange between older sovereign and disciplinary modes of power with the biopolitical. In clarifying the mutations of modern power from the sovereign to biopolitical mode,

⁵²² Ibid., p. 17.

⁵²³ Ibid., p. 107.

⁵²⁴ Literally laws of the limit (*hud*)

Foucault writes that “the right to punish has been shifted from the vengeance of the sovereign to the defense of society.”⁵²⁵ In this way the right to punish and kill is always expressed as a “defense of Islam”, as the defense of Islamic society, the ummah body. The constitution of British Indian Muslims as a uniform body, begins of course under the imperative to govern India on behalf of the colonial *oikos*. However the biopolitical logic that the *ummah* must constitute, by itself a national body, was not originally a demand of the ‘ulama, but rather was the founding logic of the Pakistan movement. The idea of Pakistan, leaving aside for a moment the duplicitous landed interests that sustained its *real politick*, was thus the first principle of a biopolitical drive, the idea that Islam, now indistinct from Indian Muslims, must be defended. Since then this biopolitical logic has metastasized.

Sexuality as Foucault observes is the point at which the body and the population intersect, a “dense transfer point of power”; a matter therefore of discipline and also normalization. And so the obsession of the ‘ulama with sexuality can be seen as an attempt to curb the aleatory and creative excess of the body. Additionally it allows them to shift technologies of power into a higher gear, maintaining on the one hand a concern for discipline over the body while simultaneously expanding the scope of operations across the broader mass of Muslim subjects, constituted as either Muslim citizens of the Islamic State or as more loosely defined members of a transnational body, the ummah.

⁵²⁵ Foucault, *Discipline and Punish: The Birth of the Prison*, p. 90.

Of Beards, Bodies and Buddhas: The Radical Fatwas of the Deoband

The beard and [trimmed] moustache on a Musalmans face gives him the strength of manhood, an upright character, individual integrity and exclusive identity. His *survival* and *safety* may rest on this brave appearance. The beard is the only kind of hair that *differentiates males from females*. The hair on all the other parts of the body are common between male and female.⁵²⁶

Normalized Bodies

Scholars working on the questions of gender and Islam have of course become familiar with the ways in which the woman's body has become a cite for contestations of religion and identity across a global array of Muslim communities. The absence/presence of the hijab has come to be seen as a marker of a particular form of religiosity (the right kind if one is an Islamist, the wrong kind if one is liberal⁵²⁷). The recent controversies in France testify to the polysemic range and significance of the hijab question. Until the arrival of the Taliban however, the male gender had been relatively unburdened from having his body become the cite of religious battles/debate. While the absence/presence of a beard had always been seen as a marker of male religiosity, within Pakistan, the "clean shaven" Muslim, like Iqbal or Jinnah, embodied its own nationalist prestige. As recently as 2002, Pervez Musharraf was heard excoriating a crowd of Mullahs regarding the lack of any essential link between being a good Muslim and having a beard. The governing and military classes have by and large been clean shaven. Every head of state, governor general, president and prime minister, event the Islamizing zealot Zia ul-Haq⁵²⁸ has valued his disposable Gillette! The beard remained a marker of religiosity, but it

⁵²⁶ Muhammad Zakariya Khandhalvi, *Daarhi ka Wujub*, Madina, 1976

⁵²⁷ I proffer this as a heuristic marker and not an analytical formula.

⁵²⁸ Rafiq Tarar comes to mind as a recent exception but he was appointed President by Nawaz Sharif.

could also signify other negative qualities.⁵²⁹ The monumental decision to shave every morning remains for most males in Pakistan, a largely professional or aesthetic question.

Given the social status of revered non-bearded individuals, the ulama have always stressed the *sunnat* of the beard, but preferred not to openly criticize those Muslims who did not choose to grow one! There was somewhat greater measure of approbation for those that grew a beard and shaved it off, which verged on a kind of facial apostasy! Under the Taliban however, the “complete enforcement” of the shari‘a, with no compromises to worldly convenience or liberal/modern values, meant that the beard was to be mandatory. This insertion of ‘ulama authority within the space of the everyday and seemingly insignificant matter as the length of ones beard, became eventually a powerful way to inscribe the shari‘a, and hence the juridical power of the Taliban, literally into the bodies of men. Punitive legislation measures the body and penetrates its everyday mode of conduct.

Contrary to Musharraf the Deoband tradition has regarded the beard as an essential marker of Muslim identity. In addition to the quote from no less an authority than the *Shaikh-ul Hadith*, Sheikh Muhammad Zakariyya Kandhalvi (1898 –1982)⁵³⁰ we could take a more recent example: a letter to the editor that appeared in Karachi Dar-al ‘Alum’s monthly organ, *Al-Balagh*, is typical of the emphasis being placed on the beard as a marker of Muslim identity:

⁵²⁹ There is the popular adage that trust for a trader should be inversely proportionate to the length of his beard.

⁵³⁰ Muhammad Zakariyya Kandhalvi’s was the Principle and Shaikh-ul Hadith of the Mazahir ul-‘Ulum in Saharanpur. His major work *Faza’il-e-A’maal* (Virtuous Deeds), is essential reading for the Deobandi madaris. He was the nephew of Muhammad Ilyas al-Kandhlawi, the founder of the revivalist Tablighi Jamaat. For details on the life and work of Kandhalvi see Barbara D. Metcalf, "The Past in the Present: Instruction, Pleasure and Blessing in Maulana Muhammadzakariyya's Aap Biitii," in *Islamic Contestations: Essays on Muslims in India and Pakistan* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2004).

Muslims are overcome with western influence in their lives and it's easy to forget, nay, *neglect* the Sunnah of the Prophet Muhammad (PBUH). Little do these Muslims realize the magnitude of their actions in imitating *Kufaar*. This is a truly shocking! And then there are others who claim that the matters concerning beards is a "little" issue not worthy of mention nor practice. To them I say get off the denial bandwagon, you're a Muslim! Follow the Prophet (PBUH) in all aspects of life, for he was the best of examples. I couldn't tell you how many times I've mistaken a Muslim brother (outside of the Masjid) for a *kafir* on account of his clean-shaven, well oiled, face. How can I say "*Asalamu Alaikum* Brother!" when I do not know if he is a Muslim. Yet that very brother then wonders why he was ignored! ... From one brother to another, I say: "Grow a beard, then, since it also promotes Brotherhood in the real world. Stand with your Brothers, be one. We know you think you are handsome without it (a beard), but who cares? What matters is how Allah (S.W.T.) sees you. And when you do grow a beard, don't mock the *Sunnah*, please grow it correctly, i.e. FIST LENGTH. That is the prescribed length and no shorter."⁵³¹

As is now well known, under the Taliban regime, Muslim males were required to grow beards according to the "fist length" prescription. Failure to comply would often lead to fines and even imprisonment for period that was correlative to the rate of follicle growth! The consensus on the importance of the beard is historical, but calls for its public "enforcement" by the State is a peculiarly modern and recent development, and is merely a corollary of the transition to the enforcement of shari'a that we have discussed in the previous chapter.

Writing in the mid seventies, Zakariyya Kandhalvi, notes in the introduction to his widely referenced work, *Daarhi ka Wajub* (The Mandatory Beard):

"On my journey to India this year 1395 Hijri [1975], I noticed something very new. During my stay in Saharanpur, I was quite unusually infuriated with the question of the beard. I myself had noticed, and indeed many close friends also pointed this out, that I had never previously taken

⁵³¹ Mufti Ebrahim Desai, Darul Ifta, Madrasah In'aamiyyah, Camperdown South Africa, Fatwa Department, (printed in *Albalagh*, Aug 2001). According to one famous author: "To trim the beard when it is less than one palm in length; like some Maghrabis do, is the way of the Hermaphrodites." Maulana Qari Muhammad Tayyab in *Daarhi ka Shari-i Ahammiyat*.

such a harsh stand before. But whenever I saw a person who had shaved his beard, I was enraged, and I denounced this act at every meeting. I strongly admonished people regarding the prohibition of shaving the beard. I could not determine the cause of this strong feeling towards this *sunna* except perhaps that I had began noticing that more and more people were neglecting it and also that admonishments in this matter were also dwindling. During his last three or four years, the late Maulana Husain Ahmad Madani (may Allah's mercy be upon him) during the last years of his life also strongly denounced the shaving of the beard.”⁵³²

Kandhalvi then goes on to suggest that unlike other sins, such as adultery or theft, where the act is temporary, a shaved beard constitutes an ongoing violation of the shari‘a. “The shaving of the beard is a continuous act, and is exhibited all the time. Thus when performing *salat*, the sin remains. Similarly during the fast, Hajj and all other *Ibadaat* this sinful act accompanies him.” Kandhalvi’s definitive account on the mandatory status of the beard, like almost any other work by a Deoband ‘alim, consists largely of multiple citations from the accepted corpus of hadith, *sirah* and commentaries, and also includes similar judgments from other senior and well respected Deoband giants. Kandhalvi draws routinely on the authority of Husain Ahmad Madani, and Ashraf ‘Ali Thanawi (1863 – 1943). For instance he cites Abu Hurairah: “Abu Hurairah reports that the Rasul Allah [Prophet] said: ‘Lengthen your beards and cut your moustaches, and in this matter do not imitate the Jews and Christians.’” He goes on to remark that it is “unfortunate that today, by aping the Christians, we are neglecting and destroying this blessed and very important *Sunnat* of the Prophet.” By quoting numerous sources he goes on to verify the “Shari‘a commands that the length of the beard should be one fist full, when held from below the chin. According to the *ijma* of the ulama it is not permissible to have a beard shorter than this.”

⁵³² Zakariyya Kandhalvi, *Daarhi ka Wujub*

While Ashraf ‘Ali Thanawi and Husain Ahmad Madani could not agree on the question of nationalism, their agreement on the mandatory status of the beard was near unanimous. Maulana Ashraf ‘Ali Thanawi in his work “*Islahur Rusoom*” also categorically states the centrality and importance of the beard. It is worth quoting sections from his work:

The Hadith categorically states that the beard should be lengthened and the moustaches cut. This is narrated both in ‘Bukhari’ and ‘Muslim’. The Prophet has sternly commanded this to his followers. Wherever Rasul Allah gives a *command* then that act becomes *wajib* (compulsory), and to neglect this *wajib* command is completely *Haram* (forbidden, prohibited, banned). Thus it is *haram* to shave the beard and keep long moustaches. ... Now, since it has been *factually* established that it is a *sinful* act to shave or shorten the beard, those who are adamant in this practice, and furthermore regard the growing of the beard as an embarrassment, and jeer and mock at those who do keep full beards; for such people to maintain their *Imam* (faith) is most difficult. For them it is imperative that they repent forthwith and also renew their *Imam* and marital vows; and fashion their appearances according to the teachings of Allah and His Prophet.⁵³³

Thanawi then deploys a series of *psychological*, *rational* and *aesthetic*, arguments in favour of keeping the beard according to shari‘a prescriptions:

Some people shave to appear young and to hide their age this is totally meaningless Age is a gift from Allah, the more years you have lived, the more blessed you are. if according to some fools the keeping of the beard is the cause for embarrassment, then they should remember that according to many *kafirs*, to be a Muslim is itself a cause of embarrassment and a sign of backwardness. So Allah forbid, should you forsake Islam also? Just as we do not abandon Islam because the *kufaar* regard it as backward, so why should the very symbol and appearance of Islam be neglected because some irreligious misfits think it [the beard] is an embarrassment and an uncomely appearance. ... Also, *rationally*, the beard for men is like the beauty of the hair on a woman’s head, both being creations of beauty. If the shaving of the hair on a woman’s head is considered unnatural and depraved, then how could the shaving of a males face ever contribute to his good looks. Surely there is no explanation,

⁵³³ Thanawi, *Islahur Rusoom*

except that foreign customs have pulled a curtain over our insight and reasoning, and have clouded our common sense.

In his intervention on the subject of the beard, “*Daarhi ka Phulsafa*” (The Philosophy of the Beard) Maulana Husain Ahmad Madani further articulates the connection between the beard and Muslim identity. For Madani the beard is the *uniform* of the Muslim! The biopolitical significance of the beard as the equivalent of a nationalist flag could not be more explicit.

If we observe the English, French or Germans etc., we see that they have their own flags and their exclusive *uniforms*, such that those who are familiar with them could immediately identify any of them. They can be identified on the battlefields and in political arenas. *Every nation does its utmost to promote and protect its flag and also its national symbols and emblems.* In fact if transgressions are made [against those symbols] it could lead to dangerous situations. Pull down a flag or insult it in any way, and then see the consequences, *they could even lead to war.**Uniforms are necessary for the effective functioning of any kingdom or government,* that is why they important among all tribes and nations ... in *Allah's Kingdom.* ... Those nations and countries who do not preserve and protect their uniform and identity are very easily and quickly absorbed into other nations. They disappear in such a manner that no trace of their name or culture remains. ... The Sikhs uphold their symbol of identity by keeping the hair of their head and beard. ... The British came to India at the end of the sixteenth century. They stayed for about two hundred and fifty years. They came from a country that is cold, but they did not give up their coats, trousers, hats and neckties in this country, which is very hot. That is why a nation of three hundred and fifty million could not absorb the comparatively small numbers that came. They held forth their identity as a separate nation and as an exclusive government. ... It is evident from this that *any nation or religion can only continue to survive when it adopts an exclusive form of appearance,* civilization and culture, custom and language. Therefore it is necessary for the religion of Islam— which is higher than all other religions in its beliefs, character and practice—to adopt an exclusive uniform and outlook. *To protect and preserve this mode and uniform is tantamount to protecting the religion itself, and lives will readily be sacrificed for this purpose.*⁵³⁴

⁵³⁴ Madani, *Daarhi ka Phulsafa*

Madani, having defined the West as an essentially “shaven community”, redirects the essentializing gaze of Orientalism back upon Europe with the same biopolitical occularity; viewing white man as in essence determined by his hair style, the filth of swine and pork eating, and sexual and moral decadence. He continues with his *islah* (admonishment):

He who chooses for himself the [fashion] of another people will be regarded as from them’. This is the Hadith which at times annoy many un-Islamically inclined youth. [But] historical facts should be studied and in view of what the enemies of Islam have done, *their exclusive uniforms and their attire and fashions should be shunned and disliked*. It does not matter whether the fashions are those of Curzon; Gladstone, France or America, or whether they are related to dress, body, language, culture or customs. In every locality and every country of the world it is regarded as natural and human to like and adopt everything that a friend likes, and to regard everything of an enemy with contempt and as foreign. Especially those things that exclusively belong to the enemies. Therefore our earnest effort must be to become loyal and honest followers of Muhammad, and not slaves of Curzon, Harding, France or America.⁵³⁵

What is to be noted here, in these tedious yet revealing extracts is that despite the passionate arguments, and chastisements, at no point do any of these figures suggest that the state or any other authority enforce compliance with this prescription. Thus as we can see even as late as 1975, Kandhalvi was merely annoyed that fellow Muslims were neglecting the sunnat. For Thanawi the question of the beard is expressed largely an issue of love for the prophet, ones community, identify and ultimately personal salvation. In Madani’s work there is a clearer sense of the us vs. binary being developed. However this formal opposition to the customs and practices of the non-Muslim, especially in light of their political superiority, left the ‘ulama helpless against the very *savoir* of the colonial period; the idea that Muslims constitute a people with a flag and a uniform!

⁵³⁵ Madani, *Daarhi ka Phulsafa*

In *Hayat-ul Muslimin*,⁵³⁶ Ashraf ‘Ali Thanawi heightens his fetishization of the subject when he states that “appearance” is fundamental to “identity” and that it was prohibited for a Muslim to shave his beard, and take on the appearance of a Westerner: “Thus shaving or cutting the beard... wearing shorts, are completely forbidden... If a Muslim despises or mocks at such shari‘a prohibitions, his act of transgression progresses from sin to *kufir*.” One could of course argue that this is precisely the foundation for classic Taliban politics, who had taken the bearded sentiments of the traditionalist masters, and carried them to their practico-political conclusion. Under an *‘amr bil marouf* regime, such as the Taliban’s, the enforcement of the beard was thus bound to occur? If shaving is an act of *kufir*, then does not the Muslim become a *murtid*?

While this formulation of the argument, Thanawi + political power = Taliban (reformulated elsewhere as Islam + Power = Radical Fundamentalism), is perhaps too linear and problematic, it certainly makes it tendentious to simply dismiss the Taliban as aberrant extremists! Arguably however Thanawi makes his admonishments and passionate judgments as he does precisely because he was operating in a juridically neutered space. In such a context the invocation of *kufir* would have had a different affective resonance.⁵³⁷ So we might ask, what has intervened between Thanawi of the 1930’s (or even the Kandhalvi in the 70’s) and the Taliban today? One obvious answer is the State. Given however the way in which Thanawi and the Ahrar gravitated to the possibility of an Islamic State, one might detect another logic at work, one which has today crossed a (biopolitical) threshold. Given the extraordinary emphasis placed on “Islamizing” the State through the judiciary, it is clear that Thanawi must have imagined

⁵³⁶ Thanawi, Ashraf ‘Ali, *Hayat-ul-Muslimeen*, (Idaratul-Ma’arif, 1419 AH / 1998).

⁵³⁷ In the way for instance that the term evil is invoked in everyday discourse.

what State power could do for the restoration of Islamic sovereignty. While it is unclear if Thanawi would have suggested the deployment of coercive State forces to enforce all forms of shari‘a norms,⁵³⁸ it is clear that the idea of Pakistan was attractive because it was simultaneously an idea of Muslim power. Thanawi’s piety had given way to the lure of the political, and the constitution of the Muslim as a biopolitical body was essential to that thrust.

But we can also read these earlier admonishments as efforts to preserve a historically normalized consensus regarding the status of the beard. The normalizing force of ‘ulama disciplinary power was coming under increasing erasure. The punitive potential of ‘ulama discourse therefore rested on the counter-construction of a delinquent subject. For Thanawi and Kandhalvi the shari‘a violator was just such a delinquent in need of rehabilitation and repentance. Under a Taliban style dispensation however the mere delinquent becomes the offender: “The delinquent is to be distinguished from the offender by the fact that it is not so much his act as his life that is relevant in characterizing him. ... The legal punishment bears upon an act; the punitive technique on a life.”⁵³⁹ Normativity can be viewed as a spatial practice, one that is sustained by discipline and transformed into a classifying lifestyle through the rise of biopower.

In terms more prosaic terms, one of the tasks of a critical, effective history is to trace and identify the kinds of sociopolitical and discursive transformations, the shifts in mood and history, that can be marshaled to understand the ways in which the Deoband

⁵³⁸ Imam Abu Hanifa was always weary of entrusting morality to the state. See David S. Powers, *Law, Society and Culture in the Maghrib, 1300-1500*, Cambridge Studies in Islamic Civilization (Cambridge University Press, 2002). Also Brannon M. Wheeler, *Applying the Canon in Islam: The Authorization and Maintenance of Interpretive Reasoning in Hanafi Scholarship*, Suny Series, toward a Comparative Philosophy of Religions (Albany: State University of New York Press, 1996).

⁵³⁹ Foucault, *Discipline and Punish: The Birth of the Prison*, p. 251.

community has facilitated and spawned particularly violent, intolerant and sectarian forms of political practice; practices that are simultaneously distanced and sanctioned by many of the mainstream Deoband ‘ulama. In other words how is it possible that the heirs of the deeply meditative, erudite, pietistic and scholarly tradition has morphed into a violent and abject movement known as the Taliban. What happened to the heirs of Ashraf ‘Ali Thanawi—revered as one of the “greatest ‘ulama of the century”—and the heirs of Husain Ahmad Madani—*mohtamim* of the seminal seminary at Deoband, leader of the JUH, and a man who argued for co-operation with the “Hindu infested”⁵⁴⁰ Indian National Congress over and above his Muslim nationalist co-religionist. How could such traditions produce the now equally revered (and feared) Mullah Omar, the one-eyed captain of the Taliban, the surrogate “Amir al-Momineen” (commander of the faithful) of the new Deoband.⁵⁴¹ Alternatively put, what are the conditions of possibility that allow for the emergence of diametrically opposed politics and sensibilities from within an ostensibly uniform set of religious discourses and practice (Deoband). The opposition I am exploring here is the apparent gulf between the sensibilities of the early founders of the Deoband and the most recent permutation of that institution the Taliban. The Taliban have of course been widely coded as radical fundamentalists, as an incarnation of a medieval specter, stubbornly refusing its Hegelian destiny to dissolve under modernity or at best as a pathological phenomenon that suggests containment or control. On a meta-colonial level the politicized traditionalism of the Taliban has undoubtedly been forged through the distortionary violence of cold war geo-politics. But as I have tried to show this phase transition begins well before the influence of the American empire. Like

⁵⁴⁰ Mawlana Mawdudi’s term.

⁵⁴¹ Currently in *ghaiba*.

colonialism, American Empire should be viewed not as a primary cause of Taliban violence (the US supported the Mujahideen argument), but as merely a conductor and intensifier of the conditions of possibility of sovereign power.

From the metacolonial perspective however, we can view this phase transition of the ‘ulama as one from disciplinary power to biopower. Under a disciplinary regime the ‘criminal’ is known through his transgressive deeds. Under biopower the delinquent is known through her abnormal personality (the terrorist, the heretic). The fetishization of subjectivity that characterized the ‘ulama angst regarding the beard, has today intensified in the Islamist production of a biopolitical society, where delinquency is specified in terms not so much of the law but of the norm⁵⁴²” The shari‘a order thus coincides perfectly with the “‘criminological’ labyrinth from which we have certainly not yet emerged”.⁵⁴³

My endeavor in the dissertation as a whole was to underscore, and bring to the surface, modes of hegemony and forms of dialogic that operated outside of and alongside the larger Islam/West, Islam/Modernity binarisms. Hence in raising the issue of the relationship between the mainstream Deoband ‘ulama and the Taliban, I am not so much concerned with the specter of “Political Islam,” a ghost that haunts liberal consciousness as much as it animates a revived neo-conservative agenda for full spectrum global dominance. Instead I am interested in underscoring the deeply historical play of forces as they play out in the going process of contestations between diverse social groups, not only for political, economic and ideological power, but also for the mantle of Islam!

⁵⁴² Foucault, *Discipline and Punish: The Birth of the Prison*, p. 253.

⁵⁴³ Ibid., p. 254.

The question that the enforcement of the beard raises is complex. The views of the ulama on the beard have been clear for centuries. Madani and Thanawi had published fatwa on the beard in the mid 1920's and 30's, and the *Fatwa-e-Deoband* also contains dozens of related fatwa. Every Dar-ul Ifta routinely produces fatwa concerning the mandatory status of the beard. But at what point did the beard become politicized? Not all kufr are equal it seems. The issue of the beard was not a rallying point until the Taliban, Kandhalvi's irritation notwithstanding. But it is clear that the increased clout resulting from the blasphemy laws, coupled with the Taliban's defiant assertiveness, have provided the conditions of possibility for the reassertion of the beard! The strategy of sovereign power includes the criminalization of increasing spheres of everyday life. By appealing to a history of colonial domination and the need to preserve and protect Muslim identity, the power and prestige of the 'ulama as protectors of the faith and therefore as sovereign surrogates was suddenly enhanced.

Power over Speech: The "Mohasib" Case

Whereas in Afghanistan the State was subordinate to the shari'a, in Pakistan the situation was still reversed, despite the introduction of the parallel legal track of the Shari'a Courts. These parallel tracks were however to increasingly cross over and conflict with one another. Despite a desire to mimic such a ruling, the 'ulama did not wield sufficient influence or power to introduce a Taliban style "beard bill." However the potentiality of the beard, like mandatory hijab in Iran and Saudi Arabia, remains an allure for the 'ulama who seek to extend their logic of control over every segment of life. Therefore even the beard cannot be enforced, its sacred status can not be challenged.

Challenging the importance of the beard is thus tantamount to an active heresy. In a similar fashion Azam Tariq of the SSP declared that it was blasphemous to challenge the blasphemy laws!

In May of 2001, Pakistan's NWFP authorities sealed and took away the publishing license of the regional daily "*Mohasib*", published in Abbottabad (fifty kilometers north of Islamabad). This decision followed the publication, on 29 May, of an article titled "The Beard and Islam." In this text, local intellectual and poet Jamil Yusuf criticized the position of Pakistani 'ulama who affirm that a man without a beard could not be a good Muslim. The article also criticized the role of religious leaders who used religion to serve their personal interests. Following its publication, students from a nearby madrasa publicly threatened the newspaper, and threatened to kill the editor unless he was arrested.⁵⁴⁴ During a demonstration organized on 8 June, in Abbottabad, the 'ulama called for the death penalty against the writer responsible for this act of "blasphemy".

The same day, police arrested managing editor Shahid Chaudhry, news editor Shakil Tahirkheli and sub-editor Raja Muhammad Haroon, in accordance with sections 295a and c of blasphemy law. They were detained for two days in the Cant police station and then transferred to a jail in Abbottabad.⁵⁴⁵ These arrests were linked to a blasphemy complaint that was lodged by Waqar Jadoon. Jadoon as one can now predict was an avid member of the youth wing of the local Khatm-i Nubuwwat chapter. Although the charges were eventually dropped, the unofficial street violence and death threats, had a censoring effect on the entire press establishment. The Deoband may not have had the power to

⁵⁴⁴ The government has often intervened in such situations in order to protect the individual from mob harassment. In addition to the case mentioned at the opening of the chapter, several such lynchings have occurred in the past.

⁵⁴⁵ *The News*, June 16, 2001.

“enforce” the beard, but they certainly exercised their power to make any author and editor think twice about challenging the sacred status of the beard! Once again this is an example of taqwa politics; a politics of the “publics fear!”

Of course the template for this form of mass mobilization and street power is by no means novel. The Ahrar as we have seen used it to stunning effect in 1953 and 1974. Nor is this form of harassment the strict preserve of religio-political parties. The ethnic party, the Muhajir Qaumi Movement (MQM)⁵⁴⁶ routinely deployed such tactics aimed at stemming any public critique of its ‘sacred’ leader Altaf Hussain (1953–).⁵⁴⁷ The MQM’s meteoric rise to power in the 1980’s became a model for the acquisition of popular power. The populist MQM which routinely swept Karachi’s local and national elections, had an exemplary track record of intimidating and attacking journalists and newspaper offices in the late eighties and early nineties. A coalition partner in the provincial government of Sind, the MQM is known to have pursued terror tactics against journalists critical of the party. Even imaginary snubs became the basis for the boycott of certain newspapers. Major newspapers of Karachi still live in fear of the MQM. In 1990, the home of the publisher of *Jang*, Pakistan’s largest circulated Urdu-language newspaper, came under fire from MQM activists in protest against reports critical of the party chief. Threats against lowly newspaper hawkers and distributors effectively lead to a boycott of the newspaper.

In addition to thinking about the specificity and diversity of Islamic societies, the above analysis also shows why it is necessary to resist deploying the over-determining factor of “religion/Islam” or “ethnicity” as a central category for explanations of Muslim

⁵⁴⁶ Migrants’ National Movement, later known as the Muttehid Qaumi Movement or United National Movement.

⁵⁴⁷ In exile in London since 1992.

politics.⁵⁴⁸ The limits of deploying “Islam” as a central category for understanding Pakistani politics come into particularly sharp focus when we consider the recent sudden shift in student politics in Karachi. Prior to the rise of the MQM (Muhajir National Movement) both the JUI and the JI found a strong base of support within the Muhajir community. But this identification with “Islamic” politics, underwent an overnight shift as the MQM rose to political dominance by the mid 1980’s. When the MQM became the concerted target of the State, many activists jumped ship in late 90’s to the Lashkar-i Tayeba. Such sudden shifts point to the strong need to analyze Pakistani politics in terms that do not distinctly privilege primordial categories such as “Islam” or even “ethnicity.” The over determination of “ethnicity” or “Islam” as causative elements in the political arena, tends to mask several factors which are more significant; in particular, the role of the military, which from the very outset of the nations history, has attempted to control the political process and gear the state towards maintaining a political economy of defense.⁵⁴⁹

By weighing in over the spaces for pluralistic thinking and limiting the scope of free speech, the ‘ulama have been able to accrue forms of power that have historically been unattainable. The space of juridical authority that had been domesticated under colonialism, and further marginalized under the postcolonial regime, became suddenly enlarged. The Taliban in neighboring Afghanistan were embraced in part because they represented the new power of the ‘ulama over those segments of society that had rejected and spurned them. Fear of Talibanization meant indirectly fear of the ‘ulama (taqwa politics). The Deoband’s overall enthusiastic support for the Taliban, even in matters that

⁵⁴⁸ See the introduction by Juan R. I. Cole, in Cole, ed., *Comparing Muslim Society: Knowledge and the State in a World Civilization*.

⁵⁴⁹ See Jalal, *The State of Martial Rule: The Origins of Pakistan's Political Economy of Defence*.

seemed in contention with the generally accepted *ēthos* of Islam, was a marker of their embrace of new forms of power (or *puma*). The case of the destruction of the Bamiyan Buddhas bears this contention out.

The Buddhas of Bamiyan

The Taliban are not extracting any hidden treasures from underneath these statues nor are they going to benefit materially from this act in any way. What is it that these people are doing? Is there a message that is being transmitted to the world? ... The very fact that they are undertaking an act that has no economic or materialistic motive despite world opposition is in itself a very potent defiance of the ideology of “follow the rising sun.” It is not the demolition of stone statues then that is causing the hue and cry, it is the defiance of the current world order! Taliban are openly demolishing the belief system of the forces of darkness! They are defying the ideology, not of the Buddhists, but of the western powers! ... Believers of Islam will choose to defy the powers of darkness at the time and manner of their own choice!⁵⁵⁰

In this section I will develop my understanding of the unapologetic subject, by analyzing Mullah Omar’s resoluteness in the face of world opinion following his order to destroy the Bamiyan Buddhas in March of 2001. I am making an argument that suggests we read this act in terms of public spectacle, performativity and power, rather than as the logical implementation of shari‘a prescriptions regarding the smashing of idols (*but shikani*). It is clear that for centuries the Bamiyan Buddha statues survived Islam, but they did not survive the Taliban. This fatwa can be compared with similarly controversial edicts (the enforcement of the beard and forced prayers) and the support for these measures among Deoband ulama in Pakistan, must also be placed within the context of the unapologetic subject and its dimensions of sentiment and performativity.

⁵⁵⁰ M. Motiwalah, Letter to the Editor, *Albalagh*, March 2001.

Idol Smashing or Idle Smashing?

On February 26th, 2001, the Taliban leader and caricature of a caliph, Mullah Omar, whose obdurate power still resides in his multiple parallels with the unseen — the unseen of his omniscient and transcendent master, the unseen of the Prophet himself, the unseen of his shrapnel wounded left eye, but most importantly his being unseen by NSA satellites —pronounced his infamous Bamiyan fatwa, which was quickly broadcast over Afghanistan's *Radio Shari'at*. In this latest of his edicts, he proclaimed all-out war against two 1,500-year old statues of the Buddha carved into sandstone cliffs in Afghanistan's Bamiyan province. These towering idols, 175 and 120 feet high, were regarded as one the most impressive relics of Afghanistan's pre-Islamic era. Additionally the *Amir-ul Momineen*⁵⁵¹ ordered the demolition of all other statues in the country, including those in museums, since they are also "repugnant" to the laws of Islam. "All statues and non-Islamic shrines located in different parts of the Islamic Emirate of Afghanistan should be destroyed."⁵⁵²

The Taliban had seized Bamiyan, a stronghold of the opposition and home to a majority ethnic Shi'i Hazaras, on Sep 10 1998. In August just a few months earlier the Taliban had conducted a massacre of some 8000 Hazaras during the campaign to capture Mazar-i Sharif (on August 8). But there has been sporadic fighting in the area since then between troops of the hard line Islamic militia and members of the opposition coalition led by Ahmad Shah Masood. The anti-Taliban Hezb-e-Wahdat party, took Bamiyan back briefly in early Feb 2001 but were routed comprehensively a few days later. It was a few

⁵⁵¹ In a bid to extend his authority across the umma, Mullah Omar was set up as a quasi-Caliph, or *Ameerul Momineen* (Commander of the Faithful).

⁵⁵² *Dawn*, March 10 2001.

days after this recapture of Bamiyan that Mullah Omar issued his famous fatwa. Like the fatwa issued by Khomeini against Rushdie, the power of Omar's fatwa reverberated beyond the geographical borders of Afghanistan. Within hours international and local media condemned the fatwa as an act of savage destruction against a world heritage cite.

In an editorial in the international Deoband journal, *Al-Balagh*, Mufti Rafi 'Usmani, the Grand Mufti of Pakistan, denied the assertion that the destruction of statues was an un-Islamic act. He noted that Qur'an narrated the story of the Prophet Abraham, who was a "destroyer of idols". Rafi 'Usmani reminded his audience that the Prophet Muhammad did in fact destroy all 360 idols in the Ka'ba after the conquest of Mecca. He concluded however by suggesting that there could indeed be a disagreement among the 'ulama regarding the priorities and the methods used by the Taliban. "There are many evils in the society," he said. "And scholars may disagree over which ones need the most attention at a given time."⁵⁵³ Similarly he noted that scholars could disagree over the particular approach taken to eradicate an evil. Some might question whether the action would alienate the Buddhists nations in Southeast Asia at a critical time for Afghanistan. However, according to 'Usmani, the Taliban had taken the decisions in light of guidance from their respected scholars. The Grand Mufti of Pakistan also questioned the right of the world leaders to criticize Taliban. "The people who nuked Hiroshima and Nagasaki, who killed hundreds of thousands of people in Iraq, and are killing people in Afghanistan through the recently imposed sanctions, how strange that they should be raising their voice in support of stone statues?"⁵⁵⁴ 'Usmani also cautioned Muslims not to mistake the Taliban for a "bunch of ignorant people. I know them personally. They themselves are

⁵⁵³ 'Usmani, Rafi, editorial, *Albalagh*, April 2001.

⁵⁵⁴ 'Usmani, Rafi, editorial, *Albalagh*, April 2001.

not ignorant in shari‘a. They also have scholars among them and their decisions are based on the guidance from their respected scholars.” In other words this was at once a tactical way of preserving support for the Taliban’s actions, and thereby drawing on their reserve of actual and symbolic political power, while simultaneously maintaining the scope of legitimate scholastic difference within an institution (Dar-ul ‘Ulum) not otherwise known for its links with ‘extremists.’

The diverse set of condemnatory and justificatory discourses that ensued around this event is fascinating. Pakistan’s premier, and relatively liberal English daily Dawn, ran almost 20 opinion pieces on Bamiyan, which were by and large harshly critical of this latest of Taliban antics, deriding Mullah Omar and the Taliban as an insult and embarrassment for Islam and for Muslims worldwide. However this criticism was also couched behind a series of attempts to show this event up as a political rather than religious maneuver. This was typified in the commentary of the now famed author of the book “The Taliban”, Ahmad Rashid.⁵⁵⁵ Rashid claimed that “the controversial decision was apparently influenced by the hardliners who appear to have emerged much stronger after the imposition of UN sanctions.” Juan Cole has suggested that Mullah Omar was influenced in this decision by Osama bin Laden. Others touted the act as an outburst of revenge, a signal of defiance against UN sanctions, and the world community. Other editorials touched on the more local political factors, namely that the Shi‘i Hazaras of Bamiyan had allied themselves with the Northern Alliance and had put up a stiff resistance against the Taliban.

⁵⁵⁵ Rashid, in Pakistani journalist circles, is more affectionately known as “lucky bastard!” (and anyone who knows what 911 did to the sale of his books, would be forgiven for thinking that there is a link between al-Qaeda and Ahmad Rashid.)

In the Urdu press, *Jung* editorials and letters were less overtly hostile and condemnatory towards the Taliban, but often registered a polite disagreement about whether the fatwa was necessary or even Islamic. The Western concern for pieces of “rock” in the face of their ‘indifference’ to the suffering of the Afghan people through the imposition of crippling UN sanctions, was however highlighted as classic case of hypocrisy (*munaḥiqat*).⁵⁵⁶

But what is ultimately more illuminating, are the various public and private reactions to this events, from within the broader Deoband establishment. Maulana Fazlur Rahman, leader of the Deoband’s main political faction, the JUI (F), who has very close links with the Taliban, supported Omar’s viewpoint. “As a leader of an Islamic party, I say that statues are not acceptable in Islam.”⁵⁵⁷ However when pushed by reporters about the *shari’a* validity of the fatwa, he went on to say: “Let us not forget that the UN has imposed sanctions on Afghanistan at a time when hundreds of children are dying of cold and hunger. ... Maybe that is *also* why they have taken this drastic action, to show their anger.” Rahman was certainly not eager to present the Islamic basis for the ruling by the Afghan Ministry of Vice and Virtue, because he would not have been willing to pronounce or support a fatwa issued on this subject for idols and statues housed in Pakistani museums and archeological sites. More interestingly Sami ul-Haq of the Haqaniyya madrasa, suggested that the statues should be locked in a museum or sold “because there are infidels who are interested in buying them. Then the money should be used for Afghanistan.”

⁵⁵⁶ Within the Quranic lexicon, the *munaḥiq* (hypocrite) stands a rung lower than the *kafir* (unbeliever) in his proximity to hell

⁵⁵⁷ Interview, *News*, March 13, 2001

In India however, where this act provided fodder for the RSS, the destruction of the idols was proof of “Muslim marauders version of history.” However the Deoband ‘alim Abdul Khaliq, vice-chancellor of the Dar al-‘Ulum at Deoband, the Mecca and birthplace of the Deoband movement, stated emphatically that: “We don’t support the Taliban action in any way. It is anti-Islamic.” By distancing himself from any suggestion that this act was sanctioned, this Deoband ‘alim, removed from his Pakistani colleagues by no more than a few hundred miles, precisely did not want this form of power accruing to his institution. This did not however prevent Asad Madani, the *mohtamim* of India’s Deoband from attending the April 2001 Deoband conference.⁵⁵⁸

By contrast to all these apologetic or condemnatory statement, the leadership and officialdom of the Taliban were loath to attribute any political motive, revenge, defiance, or otherwise to this act, and made it out to be an action that was resolutely an act of piety and fidelity to Islam. Taliban’s culture minister Mawlawi Qudratullah Jamal told *The Times of India*: “The status of all religious *ma’abut*, or deities, had been under consideration for some time. The ministry for the promotion of virtue and prevention of vice recently submitted its findings.”⁵⁵⁹ For him, the act was a routine bureaucratic enforcement of shari‘a law. He dismissed the pleas against the demolition as “drama” and in another broadcast over Radio Shari‘at stated: “The infidels want to rob Islam of its spirit. I would like to ask the world Muslims not to harmonize their voices with those of non-believers. These statues were the gods of infidels and these infidels continue to

⁵⁵⁸ *Jang*, April 23, 2001.

⁵⁵⁹ *The Times of India*, March 16, 2001.

worship and respect these icons. Allah Almighty is the only real god and all false gods should be smashed.”⁵⁶⁰

On a similar note Taliban Deputy Prime Minister Mullah Muhammad Hassan said in his Eid-ul Azha sermon at a local mosque that it was “foolish” to claim that Omar’s decree was un-Islamic. “It is a shame for Afghans even to think their forefathers were idol worshippers. Islam is our only true pride.”⁵⁶¹ And in what was perhaps a retort to Sami-ul Haq, Mullah Nooruddin Turabi, the powerful Taliban justice minister, who is said to have persuaded Omar to issue the edict to destroy the statues, stated: “We want to be known as the smashers of idols, not sellers of idols.”

The Unapologetic Subject

Like many of the other students and ulama I had occasion to talk with, Maulana Walli Khan, a junior scholar at Jami‘a Faruqiyya, displayed a sense of enormous pride that Taliban had defied the world community. He was less concerned with explaining the shari‘a basis for the ruling. For the first time Maulana Wali Khan informed me, “we have an Islamic regime that can stand behind the *Sunnah* without apologetics or concessions to the west.” This theme of an unapologetic Islam, flying in the face of western modernity was re-iterated in numerous conversations. It is hence not surprising to find that most popular and many academic discussions of political Islam, regard such statements as implicitly suggesting the radical alterity of Islamist politics, an alterity that arises from a primal commitment to certain essentialized texts. If however we see these acts and discourses in terms of the assertion of sovereign power, and as counter measures to other

⁵⁶⁰ *The Times of India*

⁵⁶¹ *Albalagh*, April, 2001.

forms of competing sovereignty, then a slightly different picture begins to emerge. The problematic of “Pakistani” history, and histories of political Islam in general, can thus be situated within, rather than against, the condition of political modernity. Viewing this phenomenon across a horizon of shared historical experience and political affect also brings the narrative of Kabul into greater proximity with K-Street than Karachi.

The use of violence and the Kalashnikov, as a means of settling public debates had clearly benefited the MQM in the 80’s. As mentioned above Karachi at one point trembled whenever Altaf Hussain sneezed. As a model for enhancement of one’s poll profile and overall clout, the MQM model was an enviable one. It was only when the MQM came at loggerheads with the nationalist army, that its own fate was decisively sealed. The Deoband’s hope for political power hence rested on some measure of direct and indirect collaboration with the ISI. Even though many ulama would deny direct linkages between the activities of their ‘former’ students, the masculinity of the SSP and other jihad groups like Harkat ul-Ansar and the Lashkar, indirectly played into the hands of the Deoband. In the language of the streets, it was a clear sign: “do not mess with us now.” The numerous cases of hunting down “alleged” blasphemers, or reckless editors who dared to post “offensive” materials, or Medical School professors who discussed prophetic hygiene, all served as examples of the ways in which new forms and spaces of power were being reconfigured. For the Pakistani Deoband the Taliban served just such a foil. By linking themselves more closely with the Afghan Deobandi’s the Deoband in Pakistan could capitalize on the symbolic victories of the Taliban over the “liberal west.” Unapologetic Islam was less a debate about theology and the principles of *usul al-fiqh*,

and more about “cultural” capital and the rhizomic flows of power. It was a performance of power.

But this form of defiance, remains problematic as a form of uncontaminated resistance because in either its apologetic or unapologetic moment, it still stands under the shadow of the West (as apologizing to, or refusing apology *to* the West). Moreover this form of contemporary self-fashioning of Islam, being merely one manifestation of a global conservative turn, uncritically inverts the dominating and polarized discourse of European culture. In other words the West remains central either as rapprochement or rejection. This constricts their own interpretive flexibility by setting themselves off of and against the already fixed and essentialized spaces of “modernity” and a “Western Other.” Additionally from the perspective of the larger metacolonial thesis we have been developing, the destruction of the Buddhas, the enforcement of the beard, etc, are all valorized as an expression of the formation of subjectivity. As acts of power they participate in the shared metaphysical space of the West in its understanding of the place of life. That is to say, the unapologetic subject, derives the animus of his stance from opposition to the West. By doing so he operates within a field of the political whose broad contours are already marked off as given, with the recourse to Islamic symbols and theology being largely symbolic deference’s to difference in order to be the same.

In pressing for such laws like blasphemy, enforcement of prayer and beard and the circumscription of public bodily practices and consumption etc., the ‘ulama are tapping into a powerful means of re-inscribing the fear of God, and hence the fear of the ‘ulama, back into society. In a secular space the language of ‘ulama holds little power. As we have seen the deployment of *taqwa* politics serves as the mechanism for the

enhancement of a juridico-discursive space where ‘ulama sovereignty can be activated. In contrast to the colonial era, where the ‘ulama’s juridical space was confined to the domestic sphere (the classical *oikos*), the postcolonial state has afforded the possibility of the reunification of the *polis* and the *oikos*. But this merger of spheres is now fully global as Agamben’s *Apparatus* essay demonstrates. The western *oikos* was all along a Christian *oikos*. The politicization of the ‘ulama which is often regarded as contrary to the modernist secular template of the separation of powers, is then, from the perspective of a biopolitics, an intrinsically modernist move. From the perspective of liberal, secular and even some traditional Muslims, ‘ulama appropriations of mechanisms of coercive control and their recourse to violence, represents “the final argument of the ‘ulama”⁵⁶² in a fast globalizing postmodern universe. Instead I would suggest that we read these transformations as the effect of globalization itself.

⁵⁶² As one member of the Shari’a Faculty at the International Islamic University put it.

Chapter VI

The Space of Nation: Ummah and Imagination

‘Don’t you know that Islam was born on 14 August 1947?’
— Egyptian King Farouk I⁵⁶³

“Pakistan,” I said aloud, “What a complete dump!” And we hadn’t even arrived.
— Salman Rushdie⁵⁶⁴

In this chapter I will be examining the way in which the biopoliticization of Islam is reflected in both popular and scholarly understandings of two key terms that broadly designate the community of the faithful; ummah and *millat*. I will suggest that the biopoliticization of these concept, most forcefully articulated in the work of “Sir” Muhammad Iqbal (1877 – 1938), has meant the subsumption of the ummah and Islam within the violent spatial imaginary of the modern political trinity of nation-state-capital. Configured around the ummah, an entire new field of security practices has emerged, constituting a new biopolitics of the Muslim population. In the figure of the jihadist then, the link then between *millat* and militancy is maximally exposed. Through a brief analysis of the 2001 Deoband conference near Peshawar, which marked 150 years of the Deoband’s service (*khidmaat*) to Islam, I will show how political Islam, with its primary

⁵⁶³ Quoted in S. M. Burke, *Pakistan's Foreign Policy : An Historical Analysis* (London: Oxford University Press, 1973).

⁵⁶⁴ Salman Rushdie, *Midnight's Children* (New York: Penguin Books, 1995).

logic of ummah security, is best analysed in terms of what Foucault called an apparatus (*dispositif*), a technology of power, rather than a distinct political ideology. The apparatus of securitization has lead in turn to the increasingly violent sequence of sectarian demarcations (biopolitical caesura) as the sovereignty of the ‘ulama is effectively exercised as a bordering practice; as a form of territorialization. These bordering practices carve out the space of exception and mark the zones of inclusion/exclusion. This tendency, manifest in the latest and more deadly round of fatwa *fragging* that has characterized the Deoband’s history, has exposed a civil war at the very heart of the Pakistani Deoband establishment. At the end of the chapter I will briefly consider how new ethical possibilities of Islam may be recovered through a rethinking of the concept of the ummah with Agamben’s notion of infancy (*ummi*).

Pakistan: The Banner of Islam

In Pakistan official states of emergency and martial laws are declared with routine familiarity, they have become cyclical almost predictable. Popular movements and public agitations have been equally instrumental in forcing the military to return to the barracks. They too have been cyclical but are now increasingly cynical. The eloquent and indefatigable Marxists critic Tariq Ali, has never been in doubt about the causes of the ongoing crisis. In his 1983 classic of political history, *Can Pakistan Survive? The Death of a State*, ‘Ali placed the onus of responsibility squarely with the praetorian ambitions of the Armed forces and its repeated liaisons with an imperial America.⁵⁶⁵ Almost three

⁵⁶⁵ Tariq Ali, *Can Pakistan Survive: The Death of a State* (Middlesex, UK: Penguin Books, 1983), Hamza Alavi and Fred Halliday, eds., *State and Ideology in the Middle East and Pakistan* (New York: Monthly

decades later one is tempted to answer Ali's question: Yes, Canned Pakistan survives! But there seems to be something too neat, too subjective, too linear, too historicist and rational and self-contained about the *Amrika-Army* explanation.

By contrast in her recent attempt to make sense of the senseless, Farzana Shaikh,⁵⁶⁶ begins by downplaying the standard neo-Marxist accounts of writers like Tariq Ali⁵⁶⁷ and Hamza Alavi who both privilege economic materialist explanations.⁵⁶⁸ Instead she seeks to supplement the standard explanations of Pakistan's political crisis (corrupt politicians, army interventions, feudal hierarchies, imperial liaisons etc.), with a more forceful probing of the underlying ideological contradictions and ambiguities — the “vexed relationship between Islam and nationalism”⁵⁶⁹ — that lie at the heart of the Pakistan project. While her initial move towards ideological incoherence places the question of Islam more forcefully at the center of analysis, rather than regarding it as an epiphenomenon of false consciousness, her overall approach is severely hampered by an uncritical uptake of the key terms of the analysis; religion, culture, the political, nationalism, and Islam itself. The key political question of sovereignty, does not even arise. While today one cannot but agree that “Pakistan's national identity came to be a divisive rather than a unitary force,”⁵⁷⁰ she falls just short of essentializing Islam. In her attempt to avoid the materialist camp she consequently swings too far in an idealist and subjectivist direction, rather than problematize the realist/idealist binary itself. Drawing on

Review Press, 1988). Also see Hamza Alavi “Class and State” in Gardezi and Rashid, *Pakistan, the Roots of Dictatorship : The Political Economy of a Praetorian State*. As she rightly observes “This focus on ‘class’ interests obscures the complex relationship between Pakistan's religious identity and its most powerful state institution.”

⁵⁶⁶ Shaikh, *Making Sense of Pakistan*.

⁵⁶⁷ Ali, *The Duel: Pakistan on the Flight Path of American Power*.

⁵⁶⁸ Alavi's notion of the *salariat*.

⁵⁶⁹ Shaikh, *Making Sense of Pakistan*, p. 2.

⁵⁷⁰ Ibid., p. 10 - 11.

the insights of Metcalf and Nasr,⁵⁷¹ she effectively traces the problem of Pakistan's instability to a contradiction *between* "two rival discourses of Islam—the communal and the Islamist." Both of these camps, she argues "have struggled for ascendancy in defining Pakistan's national identity."⁵⁷² Pakistan's problem is thus in part, one of failed signification, a problem of definition! This is an important move, but it remains at the level of ideology rather than discourse. She goes on to suggest that it is the "contested versions of Islam, rather than any disjunction between a 'secular' leadership and a 'religious' establishment that account for the difficulties in forging a coherent national identity." She concludes her otherwise thoughtful and reflexive account by suggesting that it is not more consensus, but the very nature of consensus itself that is problematic.⁵⁷³ But this insightful redirection is not explored, and she falls back on the more quotidian, albeit correct, assertion that it is Pakistan's "problematic and contested relationship with Islam that has most decisively frustrated its quest for a coherent national identity and for stability as a nation-state ... It is this contestation over the multiple meanings of Islam that accounts today for the doubts about the meaning of Pakistan and the significance of being Pakistani."⁵⁷⁴ In her analysis Pakistan and Islam appear as reified, albeit somewhat schizophrenic, multiple personalities.

By contrast in this dissertation I have suggested that the very concepts of Pakistan, Islam and being Muslim cannot be neatly separated and exist together on a

⁵⁷¹ Shaikh draws on Syed Vali Nasr, "National Identities and the India Pakistan conflict" in T. V. Paul, ed., *The India-Pakistan Conflict: An Enduring Rivalry* (Cambridge University Press, 2005), and Barbara D. Metcalf, "The Case of Pakistan," in *Islamic Contestations: Essays on Muslims in India and Pakistan* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2004). I have already discussed the limitations of the later, and these in turn hamper Shaikh's analysis.

⁵⁷² Shaikh, *Making Sense of Pakistan*, p. 12 - 13. The distinction here between Islamists and communalists is problematic, and only superficial. In many ways it simply replays the modernists/Islamist binary itself.

⁵⁷³ "Pakistan's stability as a nation-state is not so much greater certainty or a stronger sense of consensus. Rather, it will depend on the nature of the consensus itself." Shaikh

⁵⁷⁴ Shaikh, *Making Sense of Pakistan*, p. 209.

biopolitical horizon. This is why a Deoband orientation can coexist within a range of politico-ideological arrangements; an authoritarian/totalitarian system (Mullah Omar-Taliban), a secular system (Husain Madani-JUH), Islamic ‘democracy’ (Ashraf Thanawi-JUI) and all ranges and combinations thereof. This does not mean, *pace* Metcalf, that the Deoband is politically hollow, it simply means that ideology is itself compelled by other arrangements. I have suggested therefore that we view political Islam as a technology of power, and the Deoband movements as a series of specific *dispositifs* that exist within a complex topological space of power. The task then is to view Pakistan as a certain kind of *dispositif*, a thought which in responding to an existing set of problematizations, brings into being a whole new series of affects, institutions and configurations. It is therefore towards understanding the shifting dynamics of the space of power that we must turn our analytical gaze. In this way there can be no mistake of viewing Pakistan as a good idea gone bad, but rather as a *dispositif* that emerges within an already existing field of complex biopolitical and sovereign elements.

In his foreword to Professor Sharif al-Mujahid’s *Ideological Foundations of Pakistan*, Mahmood Ahmad Ghazi,⁵⁷⁵ Director General of the shari‘a Academy and former President of International Islamic University, writes that Pakistan essentially represents an idea. “It reflects the idea of a distinct and unique socio-political and religious-spiritual collective personality of the Muslims of South Asia.” In Ghazi’s view, a view standard within Pakistani nationalist historiography, Pakistan is the outcome of a trans-historical *telos* of Islam. Jinnah’s Pakistan movement, Ghazi tells us, was “preceded by a

⁵⁷⁵ Ghazi was also former Minister for Religious Affairs under Benazir, and was a key player in the *Khatm-i Nubuwwat*.

long and conspicuous history of Muslim self-assertion as a singular civilizational entity, the traces of which are prominently manifest in all the significant landmarks of Indian history.”⁵⁷⁶ One would of course be curious to know what histrionics and conspiracy theories Ghazi would appeal to in order to make sense of this “singular civilizational entity” in the wake of the bombs that were exploded outside his former office.

Today a generalized yet immanent uncertainty of violence pervades the entire socio-political landscape of Pakistan, affecting the elite and masses alike. I have thus far attempted to understand Pakistan’s crisis, as a sovereign anxiety, a chronic state of emergency which parallels a “nervous system”.⁵⁷⁷ One is tempted to invoke Michael Taussig’s observations with regard to Colombia, to talk instead about Pakistan’s “ordered disorder.” But whose *order* is this chaos?⁵⁷⁸ As we have seen, in Agamben, the state of exception is not merely an attribute of the state apparatus, and therefore we cannot simply rest content with tracing the exception back to its more exemplary intuitions, the Army or Imperialism. A general clue then towards thinking the indistinction between Islamists and communalists,⁵⁷⁹ lies in thinking about the “state fetish” that animates the desire of both groups. Neither, I would argue, challenge, nor quite understand the more fundamental nature of the Leviathan, the Behemoth that they seek to harness to protect, securitize, Islam/Muslims. Paraphrasing Taussig and bringing him more in line with Agamben, the State is not the reality behind the mask of the political, but rather the mask which

⁵⁷⁶ Foreword to Sharif Mujahid, *Ideology of Pakistan*, 2nd, rev. and enl. ed. (Islamabad: Islamic Research Institute, International Islamic University, 2001), p. xiv.

⁵⁷⁷ Michael T. Taussig, *The Magic of the State* (Routledge, 1996), ———, *The Nervous System* (New York & London: Routledge, 1992).

⁵⁷⁸ As we have seen, in Agamben, the state of exception is not merely an attribute of the state apparatus, and therefore we cannot simply rest content with tracing the exception back to its more exemplary intuitions, the Army and imperialism. Also though we cannot pursue this line of inquiry here, the order is *Gestell*.

⁵⁷⁹ Which can be read, in Shaikh’s terms, as the ostensible difference between those calling for an Islamic State and those calling for a Muslim state.

prevents us seeing a certain reality of the political.⁵⁸⁰ Analogously Islam. Both Islamists and modernists alike have deployed a fidelity towards “true Islam” as a mask for their state fetish, or what Agamben more rigorously identifies as sovereign power. The ummah in short is the new God, the biopolitical sovereign that must be defended. The profound ambiguity therefore of the concept of Pakistan, with its incessant discourse of the pure and the impure, mirrors the profound ambiguity of the concept of the sacred itself.⁵⁸¹ Pakistan the pure (*pak*) state, the sacred state, is also the state which produces *homo sacer*. It is therefore a state which is subject to the continuous ritual of purification and absolution, a process which Agamben calls the biopolitical caesura. The logic of this caesura, this deadly merger between the sacred and the State, between Islam and Pakistan, has its foundations not in the Deoband but in the very “secular” movement for an Islamic State. It is thus the very conjunction between Islamic reason (governmentality) and violence that sutures the ‘legitimacy’ of modern jihad, that — like the western conjunction between peace and war,⁵⁸² reason and violence⁵⁸³ — must be exposed. Thus greatly expanding Weber’s emphasis on ‘legitimate’ violence, the monopoly of which is said to define the modern state, Taussig, like Agamben redirects our gaze towards “the intrinsically mysterious, mystifying, convoluting, plain scary, mythical, and arcane cultural properties and power of violence to the point where violence is very much an end in itself— a sign, as Benjamin put it, of the existence of the gods.” Thus by extending Taussig’s notion of State fetishism and Agamben’s disclosure of the political

⁵⁸⁰ See the essay “The State as Fetish” in Taussig, *The Nervous System*.

⁵⁸¹ Drawing on Agamben, this is a point that Talal Asad makes with regard to the secular, and there is no reason why we should not extend this to Islam and Pakistan.

⁵⁸² Dillon, *The Liberal Way of War: The Martial Face of Global Biopolitics*, Reid, *The Biopolitics of the War on Terror: Life Struggles, Liberal Modernity and the Defence of Logistical Societies*.

⁵⁸³ Theodor W. Adorno and Max Horkheimer, *Dialectic of Enlightenment*, Cultural Memory in the Present (New York: Continuum Publishing Co., 1991).

theology of sovereignty, we can expose the logic common to both Islamists and modernists alike. If it is “precisely the coming together of reason-and-violence in the State that creates, in a secular and modern world, the bigness if the big S”,⁵⁸⁴ then similarly it is the coming together of Islam and violence in the practices of both the state and the ‘*ulama*, that animates the command, the bigness, of political Islam. Pakistan serves as the primary vehicle for this fusions of reason and violence, the fusions of Islam and the State.

Borders of the Ummagination: The Two Nation Notion

One of Pakistan’s most celebrated nationalist historians, the late Prof. Dr. Ishtiaq Hussain Qureshi (1903—1981), the first education minister of Pakistan, barely mentions the pro-Pakistan ‘ulama in his oddly titled *Short History of Pakistan*. This weighty tomb, of over a thousand pages, was the standard text for the Pakistan Studies Intermediate (FSc) level syllabus up until the mid 80’s. The book begins its short account of Pakistan in the Vedic period, and is largely a history of the Islamic world. The sections dealing with British colonialism and the post-1857 nationalist movements comprise the last fifth of the book. The pro-Pakistani Deoband are barely mentioned.⁵⁸⁵ ‘Ulama hostility to the League is given sharp notice. The text serves as a general marker of the lowly regard

⁵⁸⁴ Taussig, *The Nervous System*, p. 116, also quoted in Asad’s *Formations of the Secular*. See also ———, *The Magic of the State*.

⁵⁸⁵ Ishtiaq Husain Qureshi, *A Short History of Pakistan*, vol. 1 - 4 (Karachi: University of Karachi Press, 1988). This lacunae was subsequently addressed in his specific work on the ‘ulama. Qureshi, *‘Ulama in Politics: A Study Relating to the Political Activities of the ‘Ulama in the South-Asian Subcontinent from 1556 to 1947*. Here are more nuanced appreciation for the role of Thanawi and Shabbir ‘Usmani is on display. “There were some ‘ulama who played a more positive role in the Pakistan Movement. Some of them came from the Deoband movement itself, thus redeeming some of its wasted reputation.” p. 385.

mainstream nationalist elite had for the ‘ulama, a pattern which changed suddenly by the revisionist assessments of the ‘ulama’s role under Zia’s tenure.⁵⁸⁶

The ‘ulama then are burdened with this double sense of irony; that within the very boundaries of a nation state that was created ostensibly in the name of Islam, those entrusted with its “preservation”, those trained to speak in its name, and those conversant in the language of the sacred revelation, remain a mere subaltern, economically disempowered and at times despised class. In no small measure must this stark irony have contributed toward a degree of social schizophrenia (see Nasr on the Pakistan Madani faction). The ‘ulama thus began their political career in Pakistan, as relatively marginalized political agents, largely written out of both modern nationalist and fundamentalist narratives, as lingering specters of a bye gone era, and representatives of a community that have held back both Islamic and nationalist progress. The madrasa as the chief institute for the production of other ‘ulama, increasingly found itself drawing only the subaltern and largely impoverished urban and rural classes, and were increasingly confined to a private sphere of religious education⁵⁸⁷ which did not connect in any significant way, with the production of more useful citizen bodies. This problem of a lack of authority amidst a series of contradictory and competing voices, is what contributed to their adoption of what I have earlier called *taqwa* politics, an affective politics of sentiment, regard, fear and ultimately the sovereign fetish.

⁵⁸⁶ Aziz, *The Murder of History in Pakistan*.

⁵⁸⁷ Zaman very nicely illuminates the contradictory ways in which the ‘ulama have contributed to their own marginalization and confinement within the private sphere, by marking off distinctions between the space of Islam and the worldly, while simultaneously claiming Islam is a complete code of life. That is to say the sacred and the profane are both enacted and disavowed. Zaman, *The 'Ulama in Contemporary Islam: Custodians of Change*.

But along with these considerations, it must be stated that the “secular nationalist” narrative is both disingenuous and historically myopic. Both the involvement of the ‘ulama in the Pakistan movement and the passionately Islamic dimensions of Iqbal and Jinnah are seriously downplayed. Secularists narratives tend to define the commitments of Iqbal and Jinnah to Islam as existing at the level of generalities and broad universalist principles; brotherhood, unity, egalitarianism, justice, democracy, and all that. But the devil, and not merely the ‘ulama, so it would seem, are very much in the details. We have already seen how this problem of details with respect to the Objectives Resolution, led to a virtual coup by the ‘ulama. Liberal Pakistani’s are quick to suggest that the theocratic mayhem that has beset Pakistan was in large measure because the original father of the secular nation, Jinnah, and his trusted successor Prime Minister Liaquat ‘Ali Khan,⁵⁸⁸ did not, unlike Nehru, live to see the destiny of Pakistan to its fruition. But we must recall that Liaquat ‘Ali Khan, the *Quaid-e-Millat*, during the debate on the Objectives Resolution, had described Pakistan, not merely as a homeland for Muslims, but as “a polity, which may prove to be a laboratory for the purpose of demonstration to the world that Islam is not only a progressive force in the world, but it also provides remedies for many of the ills from which humanity was suffering.” In 1951, during his address to a gathering of members of the Islamic World Federation in Karachi, Liaquat asserted that the underlying idea of the Pakistan movement was not just to add one more country to the conglomeration of nations on the world map. Rather,

⁵⁸⁸ Liaquat ‘Ali Khan was assassinated in Rawalpindi on 16 October 1951. Khan was shot twice in the chest by an Afghan Said Akbar. In what is perhaps a strange twist of irony Benazir Bhutto was also assassinated in Liaquat Bagh, the park named after Liaquat ‘Ali Khan in the wake of his assassination.

Pakistan came into being as a result of the urge by the Muslims of this subcontinent to secure a territory, however limited, where the Islamic ideology and way of life could be practiced and demonstrated to the world.⁵⁸⁹

In this way Liaquat was merely being faithful to the spirit of the architects who envisioned Pakistan; that the State of Pakistan, however “moth eaten,” was to be an Islamic democracy and also a beacon and “bulwark of Islam.” The merely pragmatic argument that Pakistan functioned as an arrangement or mechanism to prevent the tyranny and discriminations of a Hindu majority, is buried as a minor clause in the more destinal configuration of Pakistan’s overt Islamic ideology. Pakistan is therefore an experiment with history. If much discussion, though largely paranoid and conspiratorial, has been focused on why this experiment has gone sour, it would be naïve to simply blame the lab techs for their faulty execution of an otherwise sound science. Rather it is the very ideologization of Islam that is problematic. And with the term biopoliticization (*statification*) of Islam, we can take this critique beyond the limits of the Marxist idealist paradigm.

Djinns of the Nation

In his January 1938 address to the Gaya Muslim League Conference in Bihar, the Quaid-e-Azam, Muhammad ‘Ali Jinnah, described the flag of the Muslim League as “the flag of Islam”⁵⁹⁰ and Islam as “a complete *code*” of life. We should not fail to note off the bat, how two key paradigms of the modern that Agamben exposes, the flag (banner) and

⁵⁸⁹ His address to the *Motamar-i Alam-i Islami* at Karachi on February 9, 1951 (*Dawn*, February 10, 1951)

⁵⁹⁰ See Agamben on the relationship between the flag, the banner of the nation, and the structure of the sovereign ban itself. Agamben, ‘What is a People’ in Agamben, *Means without End: Notes on Politics*.

technē (code), are here internalized and normalized in Jinnah's Islamo-nationalist discourse.

Today in this huge gathering you have honored me by entrusting the duty to unfurl the *flag of the Muslim League, the flag of Islam*, for you cannot separate the Muslim League from Islam. ... When we say "This flag is the flag of Islam" they think we are introducing religion into politics – a fact of which we are proud. Islam gives us a complete code. It is not only religion but it contains laws, philosophy and politics. In fact, it contains everything that matters to a man from morning to night. When we talk of Islam we take it as an all-embracing word. ... The foundation of our Islamic code is that we stand for liberty, equality and fraternity.⁵⁹¹

If the persistent confusion about the nature of the Pakistan's relationship to Islam persists,⁵⁹² this owes in large measure to the fact that Jinnah was himself either confused about this relationship, or engaged in deliberate double talk. In the Gaya address, for instance, he emphatically equates the Pakistan movement with Islam, and Islam with a complete code of life. In another address at Edwards College, he went as far as describing Pakistan as "the premier Islamic State"; as the state which would safeguard and preserve Muslim ideology "which has come to us as a precious gift and treasure." It was of course precisely this kind of talk, in which Islam, Muslim and Pakistan were used interchangeably, that animated the small yet important sector within the Indian Deoband leadership which subsequently begin countering the leadership of the Indian Deoband 'ulama (JUH) under Husain Madani. Even if Jinnah used the term "Islamic state" on rare occasion for most of his Urdu speaking audience, "Muslim state" was invariable heard as *Islami riyasat* or *Islami hukumat*.

⁵⁹¹ Muhammed Ali Jinnah, *Jinnah: Speeches and Statements 1947-1948*, Millenium Series (Karachi: Oxford University Press, 2000), *emphaisis mine*.

⁵⁹² For a characteristic example of the ongoing ideological ritual / impasse see Tarik Jan, ed., *Pakistan between Secularism and Islam: Ideology, Issues, and Conflict* (Islamabad: Institute of Policy Studies, 1998).

One of the few articles ever penned by Jinnah was published in the March 1940 issue of the London based rag *Time and Tide*. In this essay Jinnah is at pains to rearticulate (dare I say mimic) the immensely profound, dense and intellectually sober conclusion of the 1933 report of the Joint Select Committee on Constitutional Reforms. This report anticipates Samuel Huntington's equally profound (please do not fail to mark my irony) and consequential clash of civilizations thesis.⁵⁹³ Jinnah, lamentably, says of this colonial report: "Perhaps no truer description of India has been compressed into a paragraph, without which no understanding of the Indian problem is possible. ... that Islam and Hinduism "represent two distinct and separate civilizations and moreover are as distinct from one another in origin, tradition and manner of life as are nations of Europe."⁵⁹⁴ On Jinnah's understanding democratic systems are based on the concept of a "homogeneous" nation, and as such what is applicable to England is "very definitely not applicable to heterogeneous countries such as India, and this simple fact is the root cause of India's constitutional ills."⁵⁹⁵ What then does the homogeneity of the multiple ethnicities, languages, histories and traditions of the provinces that were to constitute Pakistan consist in? For both Jinnah and Iqbal, this unity, or homogeneity of people was determined by religious identity, Islam. Muslims therefore constitute a nation, a *people*. Here it is clear then the Jinnah had deeply imbibed a racist colonial anthropology which

⁵⁹³ Samuel P. Huntington, *The Clash of Civilization and the Remaking of World Order* (Simon & Schuster, 1998).

⁵⁹⁴ In his article Jinnah quotes the first paragraph from the Report of the Joint Select Committee on Indian Constitutional Reforms (Sessions 1933-34, Vol. 1). It begins: "India is inhabited by many races ... often as distinct from one another in origin, tradition and manner of life as are the nations of Europe." It then goes on to describe the essentialized characteristics of these two 'races'.

⁵⁹⁵ M.A. Jinnah, *Time and Tide* (London) March 9 1940, reproduced in Mujahid, *Ideology of Pakistan*.

split the Indian population into two ‘communal’ categories of Hindu and Muslim.⁵⁹⁶

Being Muslim was not a matter of a private inner disposition towards the divine, but a racial identity marker. Islam therefore is no longer a private matter, but a public one. As such the two nation ‘theory’ is rooted in the consequences of a racialized colonial hierarchy.⁵⁹⁷ It becomes clear to see how Pakistan can be seen as biopolitical project, especially when we take into consideration Foucault’s articulation of race and biopolitics.

To recall, for Foucault, a threshold of biological modernity occurs when the pole of biopower is directed towards the collective body and operates through regulating the processes at the level of a population. In other words, problems such as the birth and death rates, health and aspects of economic production have an immediate political dimension.⁵⁹⁸ Biopolitics is hence about governing life and ways of life, and regulating the exposure of a people to danger and accidents at the level of both the individual and the species. The key to a biopolitical regime or mentality then is to secure and preserve normality and order at the *aggregate* level of the population. This is the statification (étatisation) of the population as species, and it marks a decisive threshold of transition in the history of modern politics. Now, although Foucault distinguishes between classical sovereign power and modern biopower, he does not claim that sovereign power disappears. Rather sovereign power is recoded and folded into modern biopower, often manifesting itself as ‘state racism’. This is biopowers thanatopolitical underside. The sovereign element then continues to both disturb (caesura) and preserve a biopolitical

⁵⁹⁶ For a critique of communalism see the pioneering study by Pandey, *The Construction of Communalism in Colonial North India*.

⁵⁹⁷ Partha Chatterjee, *The Nation and Its Fragments: Colonial and Postcolonial Histories*, ed. Geoff Eley and Sherry Ortner Nicholas Dirks, Princeton Studies in Culture/Power/History (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1993).

⁵⁹⁸ Which perhaps explains why Maulana Fazlur Rahman of the JUI is so obsessed with NGO’s. See Ameer Zada Khan, *Mushafahat: Mualana Fazlur Rahman Key Interviews* (Karachi: Azam New Publications, 2001).

logic. Like Renan then Iqbal and Jinnah inadvertently espouse a form of modern biopolitical racism which makes distinctions within the biological continuum, not at the level of physiognomy, but deeper, at the level of culture and ways of life. The distinction between Hindu and Muslim life forms effectively divides the population into communal subgroups and races. Now the decisions to ‘take life’ or ‘make die’ can be seen as part of a bio-logic: Hindu life is inferior, dangerous or life threatening to the security of the aggregate Muslim body (clearly Muslims in Hindu majority states were not to be included in Pakistan). In contrast to disciplinary forms of power, which seeks to form the concrete and specific habits of each individual, the logic of security and biopower only plans for an uncertain and probabilistic future; “a future that is not exactly controllable, not precisely measured or measurable.”⁵⁹⁹ That is to say Jinnah’s concern was for the population as a whole, and his concern was to assure the probable security for *most* Muslims in India. Now while Jinnah may not have approved the elimination of dangerous Hindu life, by providing the logic of separatism (exclusion) as necessary for the survival of the Islamic *bios*, partition violence simply expressed the hidden logic of exclusion logics. During partition a pervasive state-biopolitical-racism thus allowed everyone the right to eliminate others in the name of ways of life (Hindu and Muslim) Jinnah and Iqbal’s Islamic exceptionalism, and by extension the exceptionalism of the Taliban and America, must therefore be situated on a biopolitical horizon. This horizon must be problematized, before an adequate framing of the solution to the violences that plague the region can be found. Thus after crossing a biopolitical threshold the Islamic expression of sovereign power takes the form of a decision on life and death inclusion/exclusion. Thus racism, understood not in a genetic or superficial sense, but rather as essential distinctions

⁵⁹⁹ Foucault, *Security, Territory, Population*, p. 20.

made between peoples at the level of ways of life, allows racism (sovereignty) to assure the function of death within the economy of biopower.

For Agamben politics has from the very beginning been biopolitical, the very constitution of the polis (political space), implies inclusive/exclusion, or the banning of naked life. The subject caught in the ban, the homo sacer, is one who is captured under the force of sovereign violence precisely by virtue of his exclusion. Hence for Agamben, sovereign power has from the very start, evinced a biopolitical dimension. With modernity the spaces of exception simply proliferate and become increasingly the rule. It is this relation between sovereignty and bare life, Agamben claims, that remains un-thought in Western and I am suggesting within Islamism more broadly also. Hence totalitarianism, Islamism and democratic liberalism remain trapped within a horizon circumscribed by the convergence of biological and political life. Afghanistan is the exemplary place of this convergence.

To be fair to Jinnah what was envisaged here was not the more debauched notion of a clash of civilization, but instead civilizational identity and *difference*. As we know from the excellent study by Jalal, during this period Jinnah was not hell bent on a separate state for Muslims,⁶⁰⁰ but rather was keeping the multiple possibilities of the Pakistan idea as a bargaining chip for greater Muslim representation in any National Assembly. As late as the 1946 Cabinet Mission plan, two nations one state was still on the cards. What Jinnah wanted, among many other things, was an appropriation for Indian Muslims of the high mark of European modernity, nationhood. Muslims constitute a nation and as such their rights must be protected by a constitutional arrangement that gave maximal provincial autonomy to Muslim majority provinces. When Jinnah felt that

⁶⁰⁰ Jalal, *The Sole Spokesman: Jinnah, the Muslim League, and the Demand for Pakistan*.

a space for Muslim sovereignty could not be preserved from the encroachments of the kind of strong centrist state that Nehru, Patel and Gandhi had in mind, Jinnah re-affirmed the alternative: a separate Muslim State.

Jinnah was also of course a politician and had a keen sense for demographics. The Lahore Resolution made it clear that his demands from Muslim autonomy would not come to fruition through some constitutional *fait accompli*. Now the matter was to be turned over the *passions* of the people, and the ML exploited the sense of a threat to Muslims under a Hindu dominated parliament with *éclat*. Jinnah may have been a quasi-secularist but he was also a politician. I do not dispute then widely shared notion that Jinnah's formal ideological commitments were on balance "secular," and certainly his many formal declarations consistently railed against the notion of theocracy; "Pakistan shall not be run by priests with a divine mission" etc. And yet he never failed to suggest that the mission of Pakistan was itself divine. Take for instance his *Id ul-Fitr* address delivered in September on the eve of 1945 elections, in which he draws upon Edward Gibbon to make his case:

Every Musalman knows that *the injunctions of the Qur'an are not confined to religious and moral duties*. "From the Atlantic to the Ganges", says Gibbon, "the Qur'an is acknowledged as the fundamental code, not only of theology, but of civil and criminal jurisprudence, and the laws which regulate the actions and the property of mankind are governed by the immutable sanctions of the will of God." *Everyone, except those who are ignorant, knows that the Qur'an is the general code of the Muslims*. A religious, social, civil, commercial, military, judicial, criminal, penal code; *it regulates everything* from the ceremonies of religion to those of daily life; from the salvation of the soul to the health of the body; from the rights of all to those of each individual; from morality to crime, from punishment here to that in the life to come, and our Prophet has enjoined on us that every Musalman should possess a copy of the Qur'an and be his own priest. *Therefore Islam is not merely confined to the spiritual tenets and doctrines or rituals and ceremonies. It is a complete code regulating*

*the whole Muslim society, every department of life, collectively and individually.*⁶⁰¹

It is not then the theocratic religious basis that Jinnah objects to. He only disputes the singular moral authority of the ‘ulama to determine the code and ‘regulate’ society in all of its minute details. What better example do we have of the governmentalization of Islam than this? Thus he effectively made numerous verbal concessions to the Pakistan-Deoband faction led by Shabbir ‘Usmani, in order to bolster support for the ML. Jinnah spoke two languages, one to Muslim nationalists and one to Islamic nationalists, not because he was a hypocrite, but because he did not really see a distinction between the two. What remains incomparable in Mr. Jinnah then is the temerity with which he was able to contain the bristling poles of contradiction that lay at the heart of both his political praxis and his political ideas. Islam was at the imaginary heart of his platform but its symbolic masters the ‘ulama remained unconvinced that the flag of Pakistan and the flag of Islam were one and the same. Jinnah for his part was always weary of the *djinnns* that the Deoband could unleash, whilst conversely, the Deoband ‘ulama were concerned with Jinnah’s relationship to bottled spirits of another variety. Ultimately however a significant faction of the ‘ulama were won over by explicit promises by Jinnah, made both in public and private, that the Qur’an and *Sunnah* would guide the framing of the constitution.

⁶⁰¹ Jamil-ud-Din Ahmad, ed., *Some Recent Speeches and Writings of Mr. Jinnah*, 3rd ed. (Lahore,: Sh. M. Ashraf, 1943), p. 299, emphasis mine

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We must learn to recognize this structure of the ban in the political relations and public spaces in which we still live. *In the city, the banishment of sacred life is more internal than every interiority and more external than every extraneousness.* The banishment of sacred life is the sovereign *nomos* that conditions every rule, the originary spatialization that governs and makes possible every localization and every territorialization.— Agamben⁶⁰²

It was however Muhammad Iqbal, who sanctifies the proper marriage between Islam and the State, not at the level of prose, but poetry, at the level therefore of affect and aesthetics. In this way I regard him as the exemplary Islamist. It is no accident that during a 1986 conference on Iqbal in Tehran, then President of the Islamic Republic of Iran, stated that the Islamic Revolution and the Islamic Republic were ‘the embodiment of Iqbal’s dream’.⁶⁰³ Iqbal is of course widely regarded as the spiritual founder of Pakistan. In her study of Iqbal, Annemarie Schimmel calls him a ‘talisman’ of Pakistan.⁶⁰⁴ To be sure Iqbal was a complex, ambivalent figure⁶⁰⁵ and despite his title as the architect of Muslim nationalism, he is simultaneously known for his rejection of nationalism.⁶⁰⁶ However in his attempt to critique western conceptions of nationhood as rooted in ethno-linguistic properties, he substitutes an Islam-State duality in place of the

⁶⁰² Agamben, *Homo Sacer*

⁶⁰³ Quoted in Javed Majeed, *Iqbal: Islam and Post Colonialism in South Asia*, Pathfinders (Routledge India, 2007), p. xxiii.

⁶⁰⁴ Annemarie Schimmel, *Gabriel’s Wing: A Study into the Religious Ideas of Sir M. Iqbal*, vol. 6, Studies in the History of Religions (Leiden: E.J. Brill, 1963). See also Iqbal Singh, *The Ardent Pilgrim: An Introduction to the Life and Works of Mohammed Iqbal* (New Delhi: Oxford University Press, 1997), and Mustansir Mir, *Iqbal: Makers of Islamic Civilization*, Makers of Islamic Civilization (I.B. Tauris, 2005).

⁶⁰⁵ For a recent excellent study which highlights the complex relationships between the Iqbal’s politics of Muslim and European imperialist discourses, see Javed Majeed, “Geographies of Subjectivity, Pan-Islam and Muslim Separatism: Muhammad Iqbal and Selfhood,” *Modern Intellectual History* 4, no. 01 (2007).. See also Majeed, *Iqbal: Islam and Post Colonialism in South Asia*.

⁶⁰⁶ Thus Iqbal could write on one hand the *Tarana-i Hindi* (Song of an Indian), which came a close second — to Tagore’s *Jana Gana Mana* — to being adopted as the national anthem of India. And on the other, he also wrote the *Tarana-i Milli* (Song of a Muslim Millat): “China and Arabia are ours; Hindustan is ours; We are the Muslims, the whole world is ours ...”

classical nation-state formula, thereby retaining the State fetish and reconstituting national belonging on grounds of religious identity.

Iqbal's presidential address to the twenty-first session of the All India Muslim League at Allahabad on December 29, 1930 was, in retrospect a landmark speech. Even though the word Pakistan had not yet been coined, the speech is widely regarded as the precursor to the "Pakistan" Lahore Resolution of 1940. In this text Iqbal, unwittingly presaging Foucault's definition of biopolitical governmentality, defines Islam as "a system of life and conduct." The speech however gives us a key insight into a series of confused and unresolved dialectical tensions in Iqbal's thought, tensions which sustain his poetry but destroy his politics. Iqbal offers an almost Hegelian characterization of Islam as the unfolding, albeit inversely, of a universal European spirit: "In Islam, God and the universe, spirit and matter, Church and State, are organic to each other. [...] To Islam matter is spirit realizing itself in space and time." Islam for Iqbal is not only an ethical ideal it is also a polity; "a social structure regulated by a legal system and animated by a specific ethical ideal". Because of Islam, writes Iqbal, Indian Muslims were transformed "into a well-defined people, possessing *a moral consciousness* of their own", a society with "remarkable homogeneity and inner unity."⁶⁰⁷ The idea that a nation or people consists not of objective factors like race, language, or geography, derives from Ernst Renan who Iqbal cites in the address. A nation thus transcends geography and race, but is united by "a moral consciousness". "The formation of the kind of moral consciousness which constitutes the essence of a nation in Renan's sense demands a price

⁶⁰⁷ It is not merely the irony of the present that makes us gasp at this remarkably essentialist claim, but it is also the irony of Iqbal's moment in 1930, when it was precisely the political division and confusion of direction that Iqbal was called upon to address. Not to mention of course that such essentialized visions of a unified Muslim population were projections of Iqbal's biopolitical desire rather than reflections of Indian Muslim history to begin with.

which the peoples of India are not prepared to pay.” The implications of this passage was clear; Hindu’s and Muslims did not share a moral consciousness and hence could not constitute a united nation. In this way Iqbal places ethics under the sign of biopolitics. In rejecting formal racism, which divides Muslim people along tribal/national/ethnic/territorial lines, Iqbal embraces what he calls “higher communalism” which unites the pan-Islamic community, the global ummah, solely by virtue of a homogenous religion. The Muslims of India, Iqbal states decisively, “are the only Indian people who can fitly be described as a nation in the modern sense of the word,” for the unlike the Hindu, possess “homogeneity which is necessary for a nation.” Thus we must be clear, Iqbal did not reject nationalism qua nationalism, but instead situated national-communal belonging at the level of religion and culture instead. But then, remarkably, in the same breath, Iqbal seeks to territorialize this homogenous non-localizable pan-Islamic community, offering words which undeniably shaped the trajectory of Muslim politics from that moment on: “*I would like to see the Punjab, North- West Frontier Province, Sind and Baluchistan amalgamated into a single State. [...] the formation of a consolidated North-West Indian Muslim State appears, to me to be the final destiny of the Muslims, at least of North-West India.*”

It is with this transition from the idea of a moral consciousness to its embodiment in a State, that a biopolitical threshold is decisively crossed. What Iqbal effectively articulates is that Muslim species life should become the object and target of the modern state, because only the later can secure it, on aggregate.

“The truth is that Islam is not a Church. *It is a State* conceived as a contractual organism long before Rousseau ever thought of such a thing, and animated by an ethical ideal which regards man not as an earth-rooted creature, defined by this or that portion of the earth, but *as a spiritual*

being understood in terms of a social mechanism, and possessing rights and duties as a living factor in that mechanism. [...] I therefore demand the formation of a consolidated Muslim State in the best interests of India and Islam."

Here we see the merger of the spirit with the socius, and the socius with the State. The collective body and the body of Islam become indistinct, and it is this Islamic body which must be defended.

Iqbal who talks of a homogenous Islamic moral consciousness, who exhorts his audience to fashion "organic wholeness of a unified will" and achieve "a real collective ego" derives his aspirations from the principle of *tawhid*. *Tawhid* is almost universally regarded as the central concept and principle of Islam, and is usually translated as the unity or oneness of God. But in Iqbal, this principle of divine singularity, in mapped onto life, and transformed as the unity of the ummah, and even the unity of humanity. ON the surface this seems like a wonderful idea, much like the peace of liberalism, but it is in fact the attempt to harness divine powers, singularity and sovereignty, and transfer them to the Muslim body politic, and the Muslim State. Additionally through the politicization of *tawhid*, Iqbal seeks to reverse the bifurcation of "worldly" and "religious" domains that are the hallmark of the secular state.⁶⁰⁸ "Reason" and "spirit" do not therefore require to undergo a laborious Hegelian dialectic because in Islam, according to Iqbal the state is already sacred and spiritual: "The state according to Islam is only an effort to realize the spiritual in a human organization."⁶⁰⁹ Elsewhere Iqbal stated that "according to the law of Islam there is no distinction between the Church [religion] and the state. The state with us is not a combination of religious and secular authority, but it is a unit in which no such

⁶⁰⁸ Allama Muhammad Iqbal, *The Reconstruction of Religious Thought in Islam*, Sang-Pak ed., Sang-E-Meel Paperbacks (Lahore: Sang-e-Meel Publications, 1996).

⁶⁰⁹ Ibid., p. 155.

distinction exists.”⁶¹⁰ In this absolutely Islamic state, the principle of *tawhid* requires us to offer our final and definitive allegiance to God and to the laws of God as revealed to His Prophet. “Prophethood is the basis of our organization, our religion and our law. It creates unity in our diversity and makes us into a well-knit community.”⁶¹¹ Thus according to Iqbal’s reading of the Qur’an, “Islam does not aim at the moral reformation of the individual alone; it also aims at a gradual but fundamental revolution in the social life of mankind”.⁶¹² There is very little here that the Pakistan Deoband would disagree with. The law of the ‘Allama and the law of the ‘ulama are not then separated by the chasm that nationalist historiography is so keen to assert. On the surface of course the distance between the thought of Iqbal and someone like Mawdudi is indeed significant, and I do not mean to suggest that these differences are either irrelevant, or superficial. However the standard analysis operates at the level of *connaissance* and not *savoir*. My argument is in part that if we rethink the emergence of political Islam at the archaeological level, then the chasm between a ‘modernists’, ‘traditionalists’ and ‘fundamentalists’ begins to appear in a different light.

Iqbal and the Separation of the Ahmadi

In Foucault’s conception of biopolitics, under modernity life is increasingly placed at the center of the political and of State politics in particular. The appearance of the Ahmadi then as the *hominess sacri* of Deoband sovereignty, “is possible only because

⁶¹⁰ Iqbal, Syed Abdul Wahid, ed., *Thoughts and Reflections of Iqbal* (Lahore,: Sh. Muhammad Ashraf, 1964), p. 60-61.

⁶¹¹ Iqbal, *Rumuz-i Bekhudi* in Muhammad Iqbal, *Poems from Iqbal: Renderings in English Verse with Comparative Urdu Text*, trans. Victor G. Kiernan (Karachi: Oxford University Press, 2000).

⁶¹² Muhammad Iqbal and Abdur-Rahman Tariq, *Speeches and Statements of Iqbal*, [1st ed. (Lahore,: Sh. Ghulam Ali, 1973), 226.

the relation of ban has constituted the essential structure of sovereign power from the beginning.”⁶¹³ It comes as no surprise then that Iqbal was himself an early advocate of a state sanctioned excommunication of the Ahmadi’s from the Muslim ummah. Taqi ‘Usmani who compiled a substantial brief against “the imperial and satanic plot of Qadiyanism” showcases a series of statements from Iqbal to buttress the ‘ulama crusade: “The best course of action for the [British] Government is to declare the Ahmadi’s a separate religious group”; “The Muslim ummah has every right to demand the separation of Ahmadi’s from the Muslims.”⁶¹⁴ Iqbal in fashioning the people, is also fashioning excluded and bare life. “Where there is a People” Agamben writes “there will be bare life.” Pakistan’s history, as a history of the land of the pure (Pakistan), thus bears out Agamben’s contention that every identity must, “continually be redefined and purified through exclusion, language, blood, and land.” The Muslim as a “people” thus always already carries the fundamental biopolitical fracture within itself.⁶¹⁵

Two points emerge clearly from this discussion. Iqbal was no conventional secularist, and neither was Jinnah. Secondly Iqbal did not reject either the State or the nation, but rather fused the two in the body of Islam. His pragmatic’s, his *nomos*, subsequently dictated the need to localize the unlocalizable. As Agamben writes, “When our age tried to grant the unlocalizable a permanent and visible localization, the result

⁶¹³ Agamben

⁶¹⁴ Muhammad Iqbal, *Harf-i Iqbal*, cited in Taqi ‘Usmani *Qadiani Fitna awr Millate Islamiya ke auqaf* (Idaratul-Maarif, 1996).

⁶¹⁵ The constitution of Muslim species life as a political body, the life of the umma, thus passes through a fundamental division which defines the original political structure of modernity; namely the categorical pairs of bare life (people) and political existence (People), exclusion and inclusion, *zoē and bios*.

was the concentration camp.”⁶¹⁶ Iqbal initiates the production of the Pakistani camp, and the penetration of “the spirit of Islam” by the specter of the exception by linking the survival of “Islam as a world force” with the need for an independent sovereign state.⁶¹⁷ Thus the political theology, or metaphysics, embedded in the erstwhile secular concepts of the state and modern sovereignty (now clearly exposed by Agamben, if not already by Schmitt), come to traverse Muslim discourse precisely at that moment when those discourses viewed themselves as opposing the hegemonic order of the West. In order to understand the homelessness of today’s Pakistani Muslims, we must examine the metaphysical and affective aspirations of the Pakistan idea, a functional concept which sought to respond to the problem of Muslim population security. It was not however merely a homeland for Muslims, but a homeland for the indistinction Islam-Muslims. It is this merger and identification of Islam with the biopolitical body of the ummah that is of utmost significance. With Iqbal the task of safeguarding Islam, falls to *homo islamicus* rather than divinity. This *homo islamicus* does not merely reside in the *madaris*, or the pious momin body, but in all Muslims by virtue of birth. As Jinnah was fond of saying, “Pakistan is our birthright.”

In his superlative study, Gyan Pandey has noted that partitions primary metaphor was the “two nation theory”⁶¹⁸ which both Iqbal and Jinnah confabulated. But perhaps the moment is now sufficiently ripe to make a necessary corrective. To begin with, on pain of factuality, it must of course already, with Bangladesh, be the “three nation theory”, and

⁶¹⁶ “The camp as dislocating localization is the hidden matrix of the politics in which we are still living.” Agamben, *Homo Sacer: Sovereign Power and Bare Life*.

⁶¹⁷ Islamism is just such a new *nomos*, and not a return to older forms. ‘Ulama law, its anticipated coincidence with the state and its current romance with violence, is not a return, but rather an extension of the modern *nomos*, of the state of exception now becoming the rule.

⁶¹⁸ Gyanendra Pandey, *Remembering Partition: Violence, Nationalism, and History in India*, vol. 7, Contemporary South Asia (Cambridge & New York: Cambridge University Press, 2001).

perhaps was always really the x nation theory. But to call the “two nation theory” a theory would be to needlessly dignify its profoundly absurd and essentialist axioms. Perhaps not even the two nation hypothesis suffices, for it was more of a two nation suggestion, a two nation notion. This is of course not to denude it of its very real and violent ongoing effects, for such indeed is the power of suggestion.

Dar al-Harb: Discipline to Security⁶¹⁹

Fatwa-e-Pakistan

The *Khilafat* movement (1919-1924) of course marks a new threshold of ‘ulama involvement in the political sphere, begging with the formation of the JUH. But if this period stands as the high mark of Hindu-Muslim cooperation, it also sowed the seeds for a double and lateral divisiveness, between Muslims and Hindus on the one hand and between Muslims and Muslims on the other. The bulk then of the new Islamist groups, from the Majlis-i Ahrar-i Islam, Jam‘iyyat al-‘Ulama-i Hind, and the Jama‘at-i Islami, opposed for varied reasons, the Muslim separatist platform of the Muslim League. After the 23 March 1940 Lahore Resolution, however a few ‘ulama, under the silent stewardship of the ‘ulama don Ashraf ‘Ali Thanawi, began to see the potential of the “Pakistan idea” for a *Hukumat-e-Illahiyya*.⁶²⁰ They began to delight in the possibility of attaining full state power, such that the domain of the fatwa, their exclusive preserve, could be enlarged from the sphere of domesticity to the full bandwidth of the political and the economic.

⁶¹⁹ The space of war, the classical opposite of *dar-al Islam*, the space of peace.

⁶²⁰ Divine Government; effectively a theocracy led by ‘ulama divines.

However the mainstay of the Deoband and the Ahrar, still resolutely opposed Jinnah, labeling him *Kafir-i Azam* (The Great Kafir). Through a fatwa in 1945, Maulana Husain Ahmad Madani, leader of the JUH, denounced the 1940 Lahore resolution and asked Indian Muslims not to join the Muslim League on the grounds that its demands and actions were contrary to the dictates of Islam.⁶²¹ Counter fatwas were promptly issued. The *fatwa wars* of 1945 are today being repeated in the halls of the Deoband establishment as we shall see below. According to Imran ‘Usmani,⁶²² Maulana Shabbir Ahmad ‘Usmani’s (1885-1948) played a major role in countering Madani’s fatwa and he issued a series of counter fatwas. ‘Usmani declared Madani’s concept of *Muttahidah Qaumiyyat* (United or Composite Nationalism) as antithetical to Islam and Muslim interests, a surrender to the domination of Hindu’s. These fatwa’s were publicly announced in his message to the All-India Jami‘at-ul Islam Conference, in Calcutta on October 26-29, 1945.⁶²³ ‘Usmani also directly debated Hussain Ahmad Madani at the Deoband madrasa on December 7, 1945.⁶²⁴ Mufti Muhammad Shafi (1897-1976) also gave a series of fatwas in favour of the League.⁶²⁵ Fatwas were also issued against the JUH by Maulana Muhammad Idris Kandhlawi (1898-1974), Maulana Zafar Ahmad Thanawi, Mufti Jamil Ahmad Thanawi (1905-1994), and Maulana Khair Muhammad Jalandhari (d. 1970).

In these fatwas the demand for Pakistan was sanctioned as Islamic. The fatwa by Mufti Muhammad Shafi, the Grand Mufti of Deoband, was more emphatic. According to

⁶²¹ Metcalf, *Husain Ahmad Madani: The Jihad for Islam and India's Freedom*.

⁶²² Maulana Imran Ashraf ‘Usmani, *Jihad ka Mullab Kya awr ‘Ulama-e-Pakistan ka Siyasi Afkar in Albalagh*, 1993.

⁶²³ Shabbir ‘Usmani also voiced his opposition to Madani in his address at the Muslim League Conference, Meerut, and the Punjab Provincial Jami‘at-ul-Ulama-i Islam Conference, in Lahore, on January 26, 1946. These fatwas are compiled in Maulana Shabbir ‘Usmani, *Hamara Pakistan* (Hyderabad, Dn, 1946)

⁶²⁴ Shabbir ‘Usmani, *Khutbat-i ‘Usmani* (Lahore, 1946)

⁶²⁵ Mufti Muhammad Shafi, *Congress awr Muslim Lig Kay Mutaliq Shari‘i Faisla* (Deoband, Muharram 1945).

him the demands of the AIML were the only legitimate course open to the Muslim of India. Supporting Congress and hence the Madani position, amounted to *kufr*.⁶²⁶ According to Imran ‘Usmani, Ashraf ‘Ali Thanawi resigned his Rectorship of Dar ul-‘Ulum, precisely on these grounds, and formally joined the AIML. However this move was taken only when Thanawi was given assurances by Jinnah that Pakistan would be “a pure Islamic order where Islamic laws are fully enforced and all Islamic teachings are followed in every walk of life.”⁶²⁷ Only Thanawi’s fatwas had the power to counter Madani’s and so Jinnah said what he had too. According to Imran ‘Usmani, Thanawi would never have issued his “*Tanzim-ul Muslimeen*” fatwa if Jinnah had not made such promises.

However it was not only post 1940 that these issues came to a head. One of the most decisive and perhaps important refutations of Madani’s “united nationalism” theory appears embedded in the twelfth volume of the massive twenty-one-volume commentary, the *I‘la al-sunan*⁶²⁸ compiled by the nephew of Ashraf ‘Ali Thanawi, Zafar Ahmad ‘Usmani (d. 1974) and published in Arabic in 1939. The significance of this critique appearing in Arabic within the discursive form of the Hadith commentary is analyzed at length by Zaman. Zafar ‘Usmani’s main contention, Zaman tells us, is that in a mixed nation society, the distinction and identity of Muslim life is diluted. In a unified nation in which the non-Muslims form the numerical majority would result in “the destruction of Islam, its laws, and its rituals, and it is therefore forbidden from the viewpoint of the shari‘a.”⁶²⁹ Zafar Ahmad repeatedly emphasizes that the idea of a united nationalism, will

⁶²⁶ Bukhari, Syed Hafiz Muhammad Akbar Shah, ed., *Chalis Baray Musalman* (Idaratul Qur’an, 2001)

⁶²⁷ Imran ‘Usmani.

⁶²⁸ *The exaltation of the normative practices [of the Prophet]*

⁶²⁹ Zaman, *The 'Ulama in Contemporary Islam: Custodians of Change*.

lead to the destruction of the foundations of Islam. “Distinguishing Muslims from unbelievers (including “the People of the Book”) is, indeed, one of the “fundamentals” of the shari‘a. And anyone who denies the importance in Islamic law of maintaining sharp boundaries between Muslim and non-Muslim—he says in a thinly veiled allusion to Madani—is neither a competent scholar of Islamic law nor even a proper Muslim.”⁶³⁰

In the commentary, and importantly for our thesis, ‘Usmani cites a number of prophetic traditions which underline the almost Iqbalian idea that the only legitimate mark of distinction between people is “piety.” *Taqwa*, or piety thus takes on a key biopolitical function, since it is invoked not only as a critique of nationalism but also as a marker of peoples and the boundaries of inclusion/exclusion⁶³¹.

The split between Madani and ‘Usmani, was a source of much consternation within the lower rank and file of the Deoband establishment. Maulana Muhammad Zakariyya Kandhlawi (1897 – 1982)⁶³² was so vexed with this problem that he traveled from India to Pakistan several times to sit at the feet of his personal and political mentors to resolve this fundamental split over the question of nationalism. The product was a polemical tract titled “*Islam awr Siyyasat*”,⁶³³ largely filled with hadith quotes, which concluded that the contradiction in positions between the two Deoband luminaries was not real but only apparent. Kandhlawi was concerned with preserving the fundamental unity of Islamic political theory, at least as it was subject within the career of the

⁶³⁰ Zafar Ahmed ‘Usmani cited in Ibid.

⁶³¹ This point further advances the necessity to view the personal, piety and other such inner qualities like honor, chivalry, etc as properly political precisely because they aim at the defining boundaries of inclusion/exclusion

⁶³² For a brief apolitical account of Zakariyyah Kandhlawi’s life see Metcalf, "The Past in the Present: Instruction, Pleasure and Blessing in Maulana Muhammad zakariyya's Aap Biitii."

⁶³³ Kandhlawi, Muhammad Zakariyyah, *Islami Siyyasat* (Umar Publications, Lahore., n.d.)

Pakistani Deobandiyyat. The split over nationalist question he declares, does not constitute a contradiction within the Deoband School, only a difference of opinion as to how to realize the same goals, an *Islami Muashra* (Society). The distinction between the two groups can thus be seen as based not in theology, but in the attitude towards the question of sovereign power. The fact that Kandhlawi resolves the glaring political split at the level of the social body, shows once again how the social and the political are in fact indistinct. For both factions the social body is the target for governmental interventions, regulations and disciplining.

To the class of intellectuals reformers, and those who felt it necessary to rethink Islam in consonance with the changing circumstances of the age (and in this batch we must include the insider/outsider ‘ulama Sulayman Nadwi) the ‘ulama had already lost the mantle of leadership, and it took the endeavors of that quintessentially honorary “maulana”, Muhammad ‘Ali Jahur, leader of the Khilafat movement, under whose milieu Mawdudi first cut his political teeth, and who inspired the formation of the JUH, to take on this mantle of leadership, which was passed on not to Deoband ‘ulama, but to the stalwarts of the Muslim League.

Despite their severe political handicap, and the prognostications of modernization theory notwithstanding, the Pakistani ‘ulama were able to carve out their own inviolable domain, and within its confines both survive and then thrive. Jinnah had of course deftly played his hands, but his recourse to Islam, and his promises to the leaders of the JUI, Shabbir Ahmad ‘Usmani in particular, animated the ‘ulama into a series of new projects, the primary political goal of which was to bring the laws of the State into conformity with the shari‘a. The Objectives Resolution as we have discussed was then the primary vehicle

for the restoration of ‘ulama authority and power. In this regard their early victories were largely symbolic. What concerns us here is to reiterate the fact that while the Deoband could point to some degree of success in achieving their multi-platformed goals, they remained until the 1980’s a largely subaltern class. Victories in successive elections were marginal, enrollment in madrasas had seen growth only proportionate to population growth, and furthermore only the economically depressed sectors of society were sending their children to become trained in their *maslak*. The only dramatic, if not draconian, victory that the ‘ulama could boast off was achieved through the violent political activity of the anti-Qadiani movement, the Khatm-i Nubuwwat Tahrik, spearheaded by Maulana Ludhianawi (d. 2000) in the 1970’s. However with the arrival of the Soviet forces in Afghanistan, and the shifting of new security apparatus, the fortune of the Pakistani Deoband was about to undergo a dramatic transformation.

The Jihad On

Between 1988 and 1991, *Al-Balagh*, the Urdu monthly of the Dar al-‘Ulum⁶³⁴ printed the jihad memoirs of the Dar al-‘Ulum vice principal Maulana Rafi Ahmad ‘Usmani. Selections of his memoirs would also show up in the pages of Pakistan’s largest Urdu daily, the Jang, and in *al-Irshad*, the monthly rag of the jihadist outfit Harkat-ul Jihad-al-Islami (HuJI, Movement of Islamic Jihad, or Islamic Struggle Movement).⁶³⁵ The memoirs were eventually published in a single volume, *Ye Teray Pur Asrar*

⁶³⁴ The Harvard of the Deoband madaris in Pakistan.

⁶³⁵ See chapter on the Space of Law: Shari’a

Banday,⁶³⁶ an edition replete with maps, and color photo inserts of jihadist paraphernalia and weaponry. The essays provide a fascinating glimpse of the jihadist movement from the perspective of one of the Deoband's allegedly most moderate and pro-establishment institutions in Pakistan. Additionally in this work we can see the indistinction between the Islam and Pakistan at play. Rafi's brother, Taqi 'Usmani is the principle of Dar al-'Ulum, and one of the senior most clerics in Pakistan. Mufti Muhammad Taqi 'Usmani (b. 1943) is also the editor of *Al-Balagh*, and is perhaps *the* most prolific and highly accomplished contemporary scholar of the Deoband in Pakistan. He has dozens of publications in Urdu, Arabic and English to his name. His collection of *fatwa* span several volumes. Son of the late Maulana Mufti Muhammad Shafi (the former Grand Mufti of Pakistan (*Mufti-e-Azam-e Pakistan*)), Taqi 'Usmani was born in Deoband, India, and received his *Takhassus* degree from the Dar al-'Ulum in Karachi in 1961, where he now serves as its President. He also obtained an MA in Arabic literature from Punjab University and an LLB (Law) degree from Karachi University. Under Zia, whose own father was a Deoband cleric, Taqi 'Usmani was appointed to serve as an 'ulama appointee of the Federal Shari'at Court of Pakistan from 1980 to 1982 and the Shari'a Appellate Bench of the Supreme Court of Pakistan from 1982 to 2002. Taqi received his *ijaza* to teach hadith from a number of Deoband 'alim under whom he studied, including his father, Maulana Idris Kandhlawi, Maulana Rashid Ahmad Ludhianawi, and *Shaikh-ul Hadith* Muhammad Zakariyya Kandhlawi. 'Usmani still considers *tasawwuf* (Sufism) an integral part of the Deoband heritage, even as many of his more Wahhabi leaning contemporaries offer a more resolute denunciation of Sufism. His unofficial *murshids*

⁶³⁶ "These Incredible Servants of Yours". Could be translated as "These Secret bodies", "These Completely Trustworthy Men", " or "These Protectors." Maulana Muhammad Rafi 'Usmani, *Ye Teray Pur Asrar Banday*, Idara-tul Maarif, Karachi, 2005.

were Sheikh Abdul Hayy Arifi and Mawlana Maseehullah Khan, themselves disciples of Ashraf ‘Ali Thanawi.⁶³⁷ Almost every week Taqi ‘Usmani delivers his sermons on *islah* and *hadith* (his hadith specialty and expertise are on Sahih al-Bukhari). Like most Deoband ‘ulama, ‘Usmani played a key role in the formation and organization of the Khatm-i Nubuwwat, anti-Ahmadi movement. He was also instrumental in drafting many of the controversial Hudud laws for the Shari‘at Bill’s which passed under Zia’s tenure.

Rafi ‘Usmani’s jihad memoirs can be seen largely as valorization of the Mujahideen effort in Afghanistan, and a series of excuses as to why he was unable to participate in the jihad himself, except for a minor skirmish at Urghun in Paktika Province. His personalized and often humorous account of the jihad is of course peppered with citations from hadith and the Qur’an. For instance he narrates the tale of a *paan* chewing Memon *mujahid*, who had been deprived of *paan* for months while on the battlefield. A serious *paan paragh* himself, Rafi ‘Usmani describes the delight on the *Mujahid’s* face when the master unveiled his own little silver *paan* case. The memoirs also furnishes accounts of *mujahideen* heroism, courage, sacrifice, death and miracles on the battlefield. It is an account of the Jihad in Afghanistan where “a million and five hundred thousand martyrs gave their blood to liberate Afghanistan from the infidels and save Pakistan and the Muslims countries of the Middle East from the communists.” ‘Usmani is emphatic that “this is not an account of the misrule that was seen in Afghanistan after victory in the fight for leadership.” He blames the “shameless civil war” that followed the Soviet withdrawal, on “the politicians”⁶³⁸ and “the greed of leadership [which] has given the enemies of Islam an opportunity to ridicule jihad and the

⁶³⁷ Thanivi’s *Silsila-i-Ashrafia* is a blend of Chistiyyah and Naqshbandi Sufism.

⁶³⁸ Failing to note that the politicians were the ex-Mujahideen.

mujahideen. However, the *power* that has emerged in the form of Taliban gives us hope that the sacrifices offered in the jihad against disbelief would bring their result. May Allah preserve the Taliban from every mischief of self and the devil and from the conspiracies of the enemies of Islam, and may he make them worthy of renaissance of Islam.” Though penned in the 90’s the very Mujahideen that he praises have now turned their Kalashnikovs against the ‘Usmani brothers.

In *Purr Asrar* Rafi recounts memories of his youth, and the delight he felt when people raised the slogan of Pakistan: “*Pakistan ka mutlab kya? Laillaha Ilallah*” (What is the meaning of Pakistan? There is no God but God). In preparation for the partition violence, he and his brothers trained in the martial art of *bin nawt* (*desi kung fu*)⁶³⁹ which apparently had been added to the syllabus at the Dar al-‘Ulum Deoband. “The local Muslims were expert in this art and the Hindus stood in awe of them.” As children he writes “we prayed eagerly after every *salah* that they [Hindus] should attack and we should have an opportunity to fight. ... Anyway, the enemy did not dare to attack Deoband.”

His memoirs constitute a masculinist history of *Pakistan as jihad*, and he folds into this account a strong jihadi affect. His recollections describe a morbid eagerness to partake in every conflagration between Pakistan and the state with India (which are all jihads of course, Maulana Mawdudi’s counter fatwa notwithstanding). Throughout the work, his recollections of Pakistan’s history of war/jihad with the “Hindu’s” includes glowing narratives of Army heroism (even the secular Ayub is praised), and he paints the soldiers of the Pakistan Army as *shaheeds* (martyrs) fighting for Islam. Thus this can be seen as a narrative of the martial body and its desire for war against the infidel. As

⁶³⁹ South Asian fighting and wrestling style.

Pakistan's history from the Ahrar movement through the Munir report till today's Taliban insurrection shows, the space of the infidel and *kufaar* is almost coextensive with the entire body politic. Jihad is in this sense very much like a cancer, an autoimmune deficiency that consumes its own body in the name of over production and protection. In Rafi 'Usmani's memoirs the duty to the state and the duty to Islam become at points utterly indistinguishable. The work is not the raving of a minor 'alim, but a chief mufti in the Deoband establishment. Nor did these memoirs appear simply in the obscure pages of a Deoband monthly. The work aims to be a paradigm for jihad, which we read as a modality of the *polemos*: the political as war. The place then of jihad, and its biopolitical inflection, appears most vividly in this continuous and consistent overlap between jihad for the nation and jihad for Allah. In Rafi 'Usmani's account Pakistan and Islam clearly enter into a zone of indistinction. For 'Usmani then politics is jihad by other means.

Even Husain Ahmad Madani, in his *Naqsh-i Hayat*, writes admiringly about the military exploits of the progenitors of the original Dar al-'Ulum (namely Hajji Imdadullah, (1817-99), Maulana Muhammad Qasim Nanotawi (1832 – 80) and Maulana Rashid Ahmad Gangohi (1828-1905). The incredible ferocity with which the British quelled the uprisings⁶⁴⁰ had no doubt some role to play in turning these former *mujahids* into *mujtahids*. This 'pacifist' turn, which in turn bred the movement of Maulana Ilyas, founder of the Tabligh-i Jama'at, was a concession to the need for a radical new style, in addition to being a concession to the overwhelming disciplinary power of the colonial apparatus.

⁶⁴⁰ On the ferocity of the British "shock and awe" campaign see Thomas R. Metcalf, *Ideologies of the Raj*, vol. 3 #4, The New Cambridge History of India: The Indian Empire & the Beginings of Modern Society (New York: Cambridge University Press, 1995).

The Deoband Conference

“Afghanistan is the only country in the world with a real Islamic system. All Muslims should show loyalty to the Afghan Taliban leader, Mullah Muhammad Omar”

— Osama Bin Laden, April 9th 2001

Between April 9th and 11th of 2001, an estimated 300,000 – 400,00 Deoband supporters converged on a small town of Taru Jabba, situated near the Jalozai Afghan Refugee camp, some 10 km east of Peshawar.⁶⁴¹ The “International Deoband Conference” was sponsored by Maulana Fazlur Rahman’s Jam’iyyat al-‘Ulama-i Islam (JUI), and was ostensibly held to celebrate the founding of Deoband *Dar al-‘Ulum* in India in 1866, and its 150 years of service.⁶⁴² The 150 years date from 1273 – 1422 A.H. of the Islamic calendar, affirming that the Deoband consider their formal origin to lie in the events of the 1857 Rebellion, and not the 1866 founding of the school. The event however was a clear display of strength in numbers and a celebration not of piety but of pan-Islamic fervor, and jihad. In addition to being an overt celebration of Taliban rule in Afghanistan the conference was a series of pep rallies designed to inculcate fervor among Pakistani Deobandi’s to bring about a similar Islamic revolution in Pakistan. According to Ahmed Rashid the event was funded by the ISI.⁶⁴³ Given that at the time, Musharraf

⁶⁴¹ Deoband organizers put the figure of attendees at over a million. Regardless of this it was still one of the largest religio-political gatherings after the annual Tabligh event in Raiwand.

⁶⁴² The Daily Jang issued a special four page spread to cover the event. The heading was “*Dar al-‘Ulum Deoband ke 150 sal khidmaat*” (*Dar al-‘Ulum Deoband’s 150 years of service*)

⁶⁴³ Rashid, *Descent into Chaos: The United States and the Failure of Nation Building in Pakistan, Afghanistan, and Central Asia*, p. 53.

has placed a formal ban against ‘political’ rallies, the fact that the authorities allowed an event of this scale to take place was a tacit signal of the acceptance of its general goals⁶⁴⁴.

The conference itself is an example of what Foucault called a *dispositif*, a strategic alignment of forces each with its otherwise own series of tactical aims. The highlight of the event included the playing of a taped audio message from Osama bin Laden in support of Mullah Omar, and the Taliban, and a live address to the conference participants by Mullah Muhammad Omar, who was hailed as the *Amir-ul Momineen*, Commander of the Faithful not just of Afghanistan, but also implicitly, the Commander of the global ummah. The *Jang* special edition report on the conference reproduced his speech under the heading “A message from *Amir-ul Momineen* Mullah Muhammad Omar.” Bin Laden told his audience that Afghanistan was the only country in the world with a real Islamic system, and that all Muslims should show loyalty to the Afghan Taliban leader, Mullah Muhammad Omar. “Allah Almighty and you should be witnesses that I, Osama bin Laden, am giving allegiance to Mullah Omar.” The Saudi dissident’s offering of *bait* to Mullah Omar drew the wild applause of the tens of thousands who had gathered at the rally. Western embassies in Islamabad protested against the governmental for sanctioning the rally, since it was clearly a rally in support of the Taliban, their aims and their leadership, in violation of the UN sanctions against the Taliban. However this was 2001 April, and the rise to power of the Taliban in Afghanistan was precisely what drew the widespread support of the Pakistani Deoband ‘ulama.

But the event also featured the participation of religious and political dignitaries from almost every Muslim country in the world, including a key note address by Libyan

⁶⁴⁴ A similar rally was held in Lahore later in April under the auspices of Lashkar-i Tayeba, again an ISI sponsored event which the government permitted despite the ban on other political parties.

leader Mu'ammarr Al-Qadhafi, who was once famed for his contempt of the 'ulama during his own Green revolution. Since the key motif however was political defiance against the West (aka the USA and Israel) and its economic globalization,⁶⁴⁵ Qadhafi added a certain pan-Islamic clout to the gathering. But since the event was also a celebration of the founding of the Deoband, and a follow up to the 1980 centenary held in India, prominent members of the Indian Deoband establishment also attended, including the head of the Jam'iyyat al-'Ulama-i Hind the *Amir ul-Hind* Maulana Syed Muhammad Asad Madani, the vice-chancellor of the Indian *Dar al-'Ulum* Maulana Marghoobur Rahman and the Indian Deoband madrasa's top-ranking scholar *Shaikh-ul Hadith*⁶⁴⁶ Maulana Nizamattullah Aazimi. There were several other prominent Indian Deoband 'ulama including the son of *Hakim ul-Islam* Qari Muhammad Tayyib, Muhammad Salim, and the secretary of the JUH Amjad Madani.⁶⁴⁷

What was apparent here, despite the enthusiastic attendance by the Indian clerics, was a sign of a major split between the Pakistani and Indian Deoband over the question of support for the Taliban, an issue which was to come to a head in September 2001. Already as I have discussed the destruction of the Buddhas in Bamiyan which preceded the conference, already showed distinct differences between the Deoband 'ulama. In contrast to the stridently militant and jihadist tenor of the most speeches, the Indian 'ulama attempted to focus on questions of Muslim unity and questions of education.

Maulana Marghoobul Rahman's speech confined itself to the educational, literary and

⁶⁴⁵ Western products, including Coca Cola were banned from the event kiosks, and to make sure that this message was clear, Coca Cola signs were placed on certain stalls only to be blackened with prominent x's painted across them. According to news reports one of the most popular souvenir's were posters depicting burning U.S. and Israeli flags.

⁶⁴⁶ As Zaman correctly notes, the *Shaikh-ul Hadith* is a title given to the highest ranking professor of hadith studies, and is the most important 'ulama rank in the Deoband madaris. Zaman, *The 'Ulama in Contemporary Islam: Custodians of Change*.

⁶⁴⁷ For a complete list of attendees see *Jang* special issue April 9 2001.

political achievements of *Dar al-‘Ulum* in Deoband, and he urged Muslims to refrain from aggression so that they would not be labeled as terrorists or fundamentalist. Also in one of the concluding panels chaired by Asad Madani, a series of resolutions were affirmed which included general denunciations of the role that the United States had played in the Islamic world. Yet despite their discomfort and unease, none of the leadership returned to India and criticized the event, nor did they try to distance themselves from the conference and its explicit backing and support for the Taliban. One of the conference organizers, and a trusted lieutenant of bin Laden, Muhammad Rahim Haqqani,⁶⁴⁸ was more emphatic about the nature of the conference: “We want to send the message that only Islam has the capability of bringing peace and stability in the world. The West has failed ... The Taliban are the practitioners of the pure Deoband Islamic thought. They have implemented laws in the real spirit of Islam. This is what we want here in Pakistan. We do not have true Islamic laws here”. It might have been useful for the Indian ‘ulama to counter such claims about the true spirit of the Deoband, but they were largely silent.⁶⁴⁹

While Bin Laden’s message was not reproduced in the Jang, Mullah Omar’s rhetorical speech was. Unproblematically introduced as the *Commander of the Faithful*, Mullah Omar’s speech hailed the “World” Deoband Conference as “a milestone for establishing the superiority of Islam.” “If we were not at war”, Mullah Omar declares, “all the Afghan Muslims would come to Pakistan to help hasten the establishment of the Islamic Shari‘a system.” But I would like to focus mainly on the fiery speech of Fazlur Rahman, because today he is still widely regarded as one of the more moderate JUI

⁶⁴⁸ Muhammad Rahim al Afghani, a senior aide to bin Laden, was captured in August 2007

⁶⁴⁹ The situation has changed in India since 2008, especially in the wake of the Mumbai attacks. The Indian Deoband held several press conferences formally denouncing all acts of violence against innocent civilians.

‘ulama. It will also be instructive to see how the thematic focus on the body of the ummah, and the danger to Islam posed by the enemies of Islam, has similarities with the rhetoric of the AIML with its slogan of “Islam in Danger”. Islam, Fazlur Rahman tells us, is still in danger, but now the threat is a new combination of internal and external powers — the US, the UN, Christianity and secular NGO’s are all charged with conspiring against Islam. And of course the Qadiani threat resurfaces. Fazlur Rahman’s speech was reproduced in the *Jang* newspaper under the title; “All of Pakistan will become the fortress of Islam.” This of course could have easily been the title of any one of Iqbal or Jinnah’s speeches. The text of the speech is worth quoting at length. “We are calling for a jihad against the secular system, announced the JUI leader.

At this hour the Muslim ummah is in grave danger. America and Western powers through the agency of the UN, are trying to trample on the Muslims, and they have a determined footing on this policy of destruction. All of Afghanistan is being punished for its establishment of an Islamic system (*nizam*). In Pakistan Bangladesh and other Muslim countries, NGO’s, Qadianis and other non-religious (*la-dini*) powers want to destroy Islamic values and enforce on us their European culture and traditions (*tehzib*). Not only are they trying to get rid of Islamic value/identity they are weighing the possibility of setting up a Christian and Qadiani state in Pakistan. On the one hand the Muslim ummah is being divided into sects, and on the other hand NGO’s are attacking religion. And so at this juncture we are left with only one path, that we take our knowledge (*ilm*) and spiritual (*ruhani*) traditions and just like the Deoband *Dar al-‘ulum*, we must wage a struggle (*jidd-o-jahad*) to maintain our Muslim identity and to protect our faith and freedoms. Through the energies and ideas developed at this conference, we will try to avert the designs of US. The aim of this conference is to thwart all the influence and designs that the enemies of Islam [NGO’s, America, UN] have in Pakistan. This conference will prove to be a critical path towards establishing a complete Islamic system in Pakistan and thwarting the secularism of NGO’s.”⁶⁵⁰

How do we begin to make sense of this ensemble of ideologically diverse groupings. The Deoband assemblage at this conference in 2001 is very different today in

⁶⁵⁰ *Jang* 9 April 2001.

2008 as we shall see below. What kind of configuration are we dealing with then? It is certainly not best understood as an ideological configuration. Instead I would suggest we view this in terms of what Foucault called an “apparatus of security” which is itself a key element of modern governmentality. In *Sécurité, Territoire, Population* Foucault lays out his genealogy of modern “governmentality” which he regards as a correlation among different forms, or technologies, of power. Foucault distinguishes between three different modalities in the history of the relations of power: the legal system, which corresponds to the institutional model of the territorial State of sovereignty;⁶⁵¹ disciplinary mechanisms, which correspond to the modern society of discipline and put in place, alongside the law, a series of police, medical, and penitentiary techniques designed to order, correct, and modulate the bodies of subjects; and finally *dispositifs* of security, which correspond to the contemporary state of population and to the practices which define it. Political Islam must hence be situated as a general element of the government of Muslims. Foucault takes care to specify that these three modalities do not chronologically succeed nor successively exclude one another, but coexist and articulate with one another in such a way that one of these constitutes in turn the dominant political technology: “in reality we have a triangle: sovereignty, discipline, governmental management, which has population as its primary target and apparatuses of security as its essential mechanism.”⁶⁵² One technology of power may provide guiding norms and an orienting *telos*, but it does not saturate all power relations. There is instead a principle of assemblage at work, which determines how heterogeneous elements – techniques, institutional arrangements, material forms and other technologies of power – are taken up and recombined. The

⁶⁵¹ And not to be confused with Agamben’s conception of sovereign power which is biopolitical.

⁶⁵² Foucault, *Security, Territory, Population*, p. 107.

Deoband conference then can be seen as a configuration of elements, what Foucault calls a *dispositif* that constitute a particular space of topology of power. As Agamben notes the word *dispositif*, or “apparatus” was the decisive technical term in the strategy of Foucault’s thought especially at the point when he begins to concern himself with what he calls “governmentality” or the “government of men.”⁶⁵³

... by the term “apparatus” I mean a kind of a formation, so to speak, that at a given historical moment has as its major function the *response to an urgency*. The apparatus therefore has a dominant strategic function. ... the nature of an apparatus is essentially strategic, which means that we are speaking about a certain manipulation of relations of forces, of a rational and concrete intervention in the relations of forces, either so as to develop them in a particular direction, or to block them, to stabilize them, and to utilize them. The apparatus is thus always inscribed into a play of power, but it is also always linked to certain limits of knowledge that arise from it and, to an equal degree, condition it. The apparatus is precisely this: a set of strategies of the relations of forces supporting, and supported by, certain types of knowledge.⁶⁵⁴

For Foucault the most crucial articulation of the technology of power was “security”, a mechanism through which the figure of population is constituted as a target of governmental reflection and intervention. Between the Deoband today and the Muslim League before it, political Islam discovers the paradigm of ummah security; the security of the global Muslim population at large. It is this persistent sense of the oppression against the Muslim body world wide (Bosnia, Kashmir, Palestine etc) that subtends the primary affect of the speeches at the conference. It is also a persistent feature of Deoband journals like *Al-Farooq*, to feature regular reports on the various crisis afflicting the Muslim ummah. Once political Islam is understood in relation to population and security,

⁶⁵³ Giorgio Agamben, *What Is an Apparatus? And Other Essays*, ed. Werner Hamacher, trans. David Kishik, Meridian: Crossing Aesthetics (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 2009).

⁶⁵⁴ Michel Foucault, *Power/Knowledge: Selected Interviews and Other Writings, 1972-77* (New York: Pantheon Books, Random House, 1980), p. 194 - 96.

the underlying affect of “secularists” Muslims and “Islamists” begins to dissolve. In this light it becomes clearer to see why Fazlur Rahman, reserves as he does here and elsewhere, so much invective for NGO’s. This is because he recognizes himself as a player on the field of governmentality. Like the State, the ISI and other groups then, the Deoband are also actively engaged in recombining elements of sovereign power and security, and adapting them to the problems of population, war and threats from internal and external formations. The speech above shows how Fazlur Rahman, albeit clumsily and with all the paranoia that is part of the milieu of violent uncertainties in which he is thrown, is driven by a similar series of security logics that compelled Jinnah and Iqbal; logics of security that now operate in a new set of complex cartographies of power. It is this space that I have been trying to articulate as the critical matrix in which our analysis of political Islam must proceed. All forms of political Islam are thus variations of a technology of power in which Islam and security are the key elements.

In *Society Must Be Defended* Foucault returns to the theme of biopolitics that he had began to articulate in the *History of Sexuality*: ‘one of the basic phenomena of the nineteenth century was what might be called power’s hold over life.’⁶⁵⁵ This new power is to be understood not solely at the level of the state or political theory, but rather “at the level of the mechanisms, techniques, and technologies of power.”⁶⁵⁶ Foucault introduces the distinction between the two poles of biopolitics as the ‘micro’ and ‘macro’ levels of ‘power’s hold over life’. On the one hand, Foucault argues, ‘we saw the emergence of techniques of power that were essentially centered on the body, on the individual body’.

⁶⁵⁵ Foucault, *Society Must Be Defended*, p. 239.

⁶⁵⁶ Ibid., p. 241.

Here he refers to the disciplines, and to what in *History of Sexuality* he calls a ‘micro-politics of the body’. On the other hand, a second pole of biopolitics relates ‘to man-as-species’, to human beings insofar as they form a ‘*global mass* that is affected by overall processes characteristic of birth, death, production, illness, and so on’. He names this new technology of power a “biopolitics” of the human race’. In light of this schema we can now reconfigure the transitions of the Deoband ‘ulama, which shift from a form of power centered primarily on the individual body, to a form of power centered largely on ummah security, as the transition from Dar ul-discipline to Dar ul-Security. It is Pakistan which is the device or logic that facilitates this transition.

The Deoband movement begins in the wake of the failure of the 1857 rebellion to restore Muslim sovereignty. In the wake of that failure the Deoband madrasa is established and it increasingly turns towards the project of normalization. The madaris is the cite where initially discipline and normalization come together. Now however we have a new series: sovereignty-discipline-security. The variations then between the Indian, Pakistani and Afghan Deoband can be seen in light then of the security apparatus, and not therefore in light of textual interpretations, political ideologies and subjective interiorities. The security apparatus bearing on each country, the specific topology of power is what varies, and it is to this variation that Muslim politics responds.

Fat-war: Reading the Fatwa as Strategy

Through a reading of the strategic deployment of a series of *fatwa*-proclamations by the ulama this section will further advance the following suggestion: that while the

‘*ummah*’ today has no formal significance or substance, discourses of and on the ummah might still be usefully understood along a series of biopolitical and affective registers, well before the range of material and embodied practices (invocations) of the ‘ulama can be considered in all their rich material and polemical particularity. Thinking the ummah biopolitically means in part to recognize with Foucault that under girding the discourses on Muslim community/society, and its associated polemics of peace, brotherhood and unity, is the logic of sovereignty and *polemos*: antagonism and war. The invocation of the ummah and discourses on Islamic community (transnational or local) effectively provide the rationale for a series of violent inclusions/exclusions (*kufaar*, *murtid*, *jahiliyya*) and subsequently open the space for the exercise of sovereign power with its attendant rights of war and death. In this way we can see that the existence of ‘Islamic’ violence/terrorism is not a political or religious problem as such, but rather a problem of the political, or better yet, an onto-political problem.

In a most general sense the term ‘ummah’ is of course as vacuous as the term ‘humanity’ or the ‘west’, and functions more like a political metanarrative or polemical quilting point. But it is important to keep in mind that the invocation of the idea of the ummah, is almost always a way to designate a mass, a population, and hence an object of knowledge regulation, and policing. In this sense ummah discourses are doubly biopolitical, in that they are not merely a feature of a range of Muslim political imaginaries, but rather constitute a modality that is useful to the logic of security that drives the proliferating indistinctions of the wars of/on terror. Transnational discourse on the ummah are perhaps, in this sense, more vital to the political economy of liberal regimes, whose pervasive logic of security and martial capacities for war thrive on the

affective deployment of Islam as a vital threat. The American project for the imposition of liberal peace across the “Muslim World” is defunct without expert discourses on (political/radical) Islam as the engine of a counter-modernity, a unified homogenous plot, whose profuse resentments threaten “Western civilization” and its “way of life”. The idea of a unified ummah is thus central to the metaphysics of both Islam hating (e.g. neoconservatives) and Islam loving (*jihadists*). In our rapidly globalizing era then, the third biopolitical triad between ‘Security’, and ‘Population’ is ‘Terror’ rather than ‘Territory’. The ummah (as *Islamapolis*) may then be seen as an extension of the carceral *polis*, replete with an imaginary geopolitics, that seeks to exercise yet again the power of normalization (Islamization). What presides over these sovereign mechanisms “is not the unitary functioning of an apparatus or an institution, but the necessity of combat and the rules of strategy. ... In this central and centralized humanity [ummah], the effect and instrument of complex power relations, bodies and forces subjected by multiple mechanisms of ‘incarceration’, objects for discourses that are in themselves elements for this strategy, we must hear the distant roar of battle.”⁶⁵⁷

Dark Knights of Infinite Resignation

Karachi has received many global accolades, including on several occasions that of “The Most Dangerous City in the World.” Such titles have usually been shrugged off as mere Western hyperbole. But since 2007, an apocalyptic mood has perceptibly permeated the otherwise thick dermis of this immense and unruly megopolis. A severe case of sovereign anxiety and radical uncertainty pervades the country and I arrived there this summer (Aug 2008) in what seemed to be the eye of a storm. It was certainly not a

⁶⁵⁷ ———, *Discipline and Punish: The Birth of the Prison*, p. 308.

good time to be enquiring into the resonances of the ummah. If the fiction of community is sustained by feeling, then neither nationalism nor Islam were serving well the function of a discursively mobilized sentiment of belonging. A nation that ostensibly had as its *raison d'être* the security of the Indian Muslim population, whose founding chant was “Islam must be defended” was now being torn apart by the very logic of its unity. In the Age of Terror, *Dar-ul Harb* and *Dar-ul Islam* have entered into a zone of indistinction. It would not be inaccurate to suggest that the very logic of territorial consolidation that underwrote the sovereignty of Pakistan, the existence of an Islamic difference, was once again busy with the task of its endless biopolitical caesurae. If Islam, and the invocation of the Indian ummah were the solution to the original crisis of colonialism and mineralization, then the solution has now itself become the crisis. A pervasive fear of Talibanization and general Terror — understood not in localized terms but as a general dislocation — now haunts the nation. By all accounts Islam, now emptied of its ontological content, is also at war with itself.

Before proceeding then to the analysis of the biopolitical discourses of the ‘ulama, it may be useful to foreground them with a series of excerpts from everyday responses to a series of general question regarding the ummah.⁶⁵⁸

⁶⁵⁸ As part of an ISGP sponsored research trip to Pakistan, investigating Transnational Islamic Discourses, I informally interviewed twenty Pakistani’s regarding the significance and meaning of their conceptions of the umma, the community ideal, or ideal community of believers. As would be predictably self-evident the singular term and its general level of abstractness were grossly inept at capturing the complex and perplexing mood of the moment. Real names have been changed to protect the identity of my interlocutors who spoke openly and frankly about Islam and politics, without regard for anonymity.

What Fucking Ummah?

Abbass, a wealthy area businessman (college level education from leading institutions in Karachi. Interview in English): “Ummah to me means the community of Muslims everywhere. It should mean peace, and security for everyone, not just Muslims. In reality its all hypocrisy.”

Urooj, a senior executive banker at ABN Amro (college level education from U.S. and leading institutions in Karachi. Interview in English) : “The ummah are you kidding me. Is that a real question? What fucking ummah... are you blind? Jeez, what a dumb ass question!”

Dowd, a Pathan Taxi Driver (elementary Urdu medium schooling in Peshawar. Interview in Urdu]: “Ummah... sorry I don’t understand?” ... Upon clarification of the question ... “Sir I don’t get into these things [read: *I’m not political*]. I am a simple God fearing man. I just try to support my family.” [read: *who cares about the ummah. Or I don’t want to divulge my personal views to you.*]

Zaheer Khan, the Pathan Security Guard in the house I was residing in (basic madaris schooling in Dir (NWFP): “Najeeb *bhai*, the ummah is a farce, everyone is looking out for their own skin, the politicians are *bhudwas* [pimps] and even some of the mullahs are liars. The army are puppets of America. But I support the Taliban because they will bring shari’a..... It is not the Taliban who are conducting terrorism, it is America. They want to destroy Pakistan.”

Sheryaar, an MTV producer, attended college in the United States. Interview in English: [pontificating while smoking a joint and drinking red wine] “*Aree Yaar* [dude].... this is so fucked up where should I begin..... [incoherent rambling].... Man I

tell you this country was supposed to be for Indian Muslims, but it's a bloody shit hole. Not for people like us [the bourgeoisie] but look at all the crap around you... But I tell you ... [takes a sip of wine] ... I'll be the first to leave Karachi when the *jihadis* come [Taliban], and there coming dude..... your lucky your sorry ass isn't here to deal with it.... but I'm telling you and shit... those guys are fucking awesome... I mean they believe in something, there ready to kill for it... we only believe in ourselves ... and they are like not afraid to die man ... don't you get it ... they live what they believe, they're not hypocritical. Its seriously fucked up!"

I had interviewed over 20 people, and it quickly became apparent that the ummah as a concept had limited and variegated popular circulation. Most people were in fact thrown off by my question, and were surprised that one could even do research on something that was either an abstraction or a simple definition. Most people did not think of it beyond its formulaic generality. For the most part their involvement with community was highly local, bound up more with either class, ethnic or sectarian affiliation rather than Muslim generality. In short the alleged metanarrative of the ummah, had no day to day relevance other than as an invocation of a counter hegemonic discourse (unity directed against the historical and ongoing colonial intrusions of the 'West'). Invariably where the term evoked passion it was across a series of biopolitical registers, the idea of Muslims as a people, as a power that could guarantee the defense of Muslim life.⁶⁵⁹

Ibn Naqshibandi, an '*alim* teaching at Jami'a Faruqiyya, a major Deoband madrasa (interview in Urdu): "Najeeb *Sahib*, I'm not sure my answer will satisfy the

⁶⁵⁹ It may also be useful to point out that other forms of non-religious transnational discourses and practices were more immediately important: networks of business, connections with former college friends in the US, discussion of Indian and American films, tales of international travel, hopes for migration and better pay, supporting international sports clubs, etc.

‘scholarly’ nature of your inquiry. I’m sure there are ‘*ulama-e-karam* [noble religious scholars] who have done some *taftish* [research] on this, but I am not aware of their work ... but I don’t think the ummah is an idea behind which a series of complicated words and formulae can stand. The ummah is rooted in a practice, and the ‘*ilm* of this practice does not come from learning by books, but from sitting and learning at the feet of one who has learned *hadith* from his teacher who has learned it from the greater teachers, like Maulana Rashid Ahmad Gangohi, Hajji Imdadullah or Maulana Idries Kandhlawi, who learnt it from the *shah girds* [students] of Shah Waliullah and so on all the way back to Prophet Muhammad” (add note on *Mimesis*)

Naqshibandi then went on to describe the *tabligh* activities of a variety of Deoband ‘ulama who traveled to India, South Africa, England and who without thought of worldly reward established *madaris* for inculcating *sunnat*. For Naqshibandi then the ummah is constituted as a space that is opened up by the sacrifices of the great ‘*alim*. Which is to say that he was not quite interested in my quasi-political line of questioning, regarding inclusion/exclusion and power, but instead wanted to reaffirm the centrality of authority that flows from the Deoband genealogy (*silsila*) and the quiet anti-intellectual practice of following shari‘a (*taqlid*). That is to say he was merely re-inscribing the structure of authentic authority, and letting me know that no genuine knowledge of Islam could emerge from an American academy! Before leaving however he hands me a gift! And then it became clear that his narrative was not an avoidance of the political at all.

The Taliban and the Teli-ban

I did not get a chance to read the paper I was handed until I was flying home (September 1st). As I read the fatwa that he had handed me — a fatwa that was distributed by mail to thousands of followers, and was to be published the following day, Aug 30 2008, in a full page add in the leading Urdu News paper, the *Daily Jang*⁶⁶⁰ — I nearly jumped out of my seat. It was a declaration of (civil) war! Its opening salvo at least. Here before me was a classic case of shari‘a being deployed as an instrument of war by other means. Already a year earlier as a premonitory indication of the seriousness of the fatwa, a major leader of JUI (F) Maulana Hassan Jan was gunned down by unknown assailants in Wazir Bagh area after *iftari*.⁶⁶¹ Only weeks before the seventy year old cleric had gone on national TV publicly denouncing the Taliban and their terrorist attacks against Pakistani civilians. In this case the Taliban did not take credit for the assassination, though it was clear why Hassan Jan was singled out. The fatwa under consideration here however, brings this covert war more formally out into the open.

The draft of the fatwa was preceded a few days earlier by a major conference held at the number two Deoband institution in Karachi, the Jami‘a Faruqiyya in Shah Faisal Colony, and presided over by Faruqiyya’s now close to retiring principal (*mohtamim*), *Shaikh-ul Hadith* Maulana Salimullah Khan. As President of the Deoband *Wafaq al-Madaris* (the Central Curriculum Committee of all Deoband Madaris), Salimullah had also recently completed his vast sixteen volume commentary on Bukhari, and was even before this feat known as *Shaikh-ul Hadith*. More notoriously he is also Mullah Omar’s father in law. In addition to the faculty of Faruqiyya, the meeting was attended by

⁶⁶⁰ *Jang* has a circulation of over 1 million.

⁶⁶¹ Hassan Jan (1938 – 2007) was Vice President of Deoband Wafaqul Madaris and was elected as a member national assembly in 1988. *The News*, Sept 15, 2007.

prominent representatives of the Deoband from all over Pakistan, including Muftis from Dar al-‘Ulum Haqqaniyya and Banuri Town.⁶⁶² Such large gatherings are not unusual, Deoband conferences are held year round, however what is distinctive in the list itself is the absence of representatives from the formerly No. 1 and No. 2 Deoband Schools, the Dar al-‘Ulum Karachi and Jami‘a Ashrafiyya in Lahore. The joint fatwa that was issued after this gathering was nothing short of a declaration of civil war; a struggle for hegemony between moderate and pro-government factions of the Deoband, and its more militant underlings.

During my pre-911 visits to Pakistan, one of my major contacts into the world of the Deoband, the editor of the journal *al-Farooq* Ibn Naqshibandi, would ferry me from Faruqiyya to *Dar al-‘Ulum* Korangi. Both schools were closely affiliated and would cooperate on a number of levels. In 2007, when I asked Ibn Naqshibandi to take me to *Dar al-‘Ulum* Korangi, he refused: “we are having some issues and I can no longer go there” he told me. It was not until I read the fatwa that I quite understood what he meant. The fatwa reads:

For the past few years, the question of Islamic banking was being examined in light of the principles of the Qur’an and *Sunnah*. The documents, forms, and papers of the banking principles under consideration have also been examined in light of the history of the *fuqahas* researches on this matter. Eventually in this regard in order to facilitate a verdict, senior ‘ulama gathered from all four provinces at a major conference on 28th August 2008, held under the auspices of Hazrat *Shaikh-ul Hadith* Salimullah Khan and at the Jami‘a Faruqiyya. At this meeting, all the senior Muftis of shari‘a law unanimously agreed on a fatwa that declares all forms of “Islamic” banking are in fact most definitively in violation of the shari‘a and are un-Islamic banking. Therefore those banks which provide interest based banking under the

⁶⁶² The participants of the meeting included Maulana Wali Khan and Dr Manzoor Ahmad Mengal (Jami‘a Faruqiyya), Mufti Abdul Hameed Deenpuri (Jami‘a al-‘Ulum Islamia, Banuri Town), Mufti Rafiq Ahmad and Mufti Saif Alam (Banuri Town), and a dozen other prominent muftis.

cover of Islamic banking are no different from regular interest based banks.

At this conference the participants also came to a consensus the law of the ban on photography/pictures cannot be suspended under the cover of keeping in step with the spirit of modernization/progress. Similarly the legitimacy of all other mediums of representation (TV, Newspapers etc) in terms of the verdict of the shari‘a is similar to that of pictures and changing times do not nullify the law. Therefore because of the law that bans pictures, all mediums should come under this law. Therefore any ‘ulama who appear on TV, even under the guise of Islamic tabligh, is in violation of the shari‘a. Therefore in the same way that it is mandatory and necessary (*wajib awr lazim*) that one should avoid *haram* (banned) things, similarly ‘ulama should not appear on TV channels even in the name of spreading Islam, for this is also *haram* and should be avoided because it is against Islam.

The proclamation effectively declares the following: All forms of banking, including and in particular those that describe themselves as Islamic banks, are heretofore declared *haram*, against the shari‘a and forbidden. Banks working in the name of Islamic banking are not different from other banks and dealing with them is illegitimate. A great deal of deliberation has gone into this decision, the *fatwa* declares, but this is the final consensus of the *Fiqh Majalis* (gathering of legal scholars). In addition all forms of human and animal representation on television or in print are also repugnant to Islamic shari‘a, including TV channels that claim to be set up solely for purposes of Islamic preaching.⁶⁶³

What is significant is that both Islamic banking and the acceptance of human representation in the media were specifically sanctioned or at least allowed (*jaiz*) by the top two schools. The fatwa is almost explicitly aimed at governing the behavior of other ‘ulama. So not only do we have here a major *fiqh* revolt, but also more amusingly a *Teli* (*TV*) ban by the Taliban; a declaration of what is *Deo*-banned. By going after both the

⁶⁶³ Interestingly they left out the question of photography and ID cards.

institutions of finance and the entire framework of the media, the fatwa is also a direct ban on secular economic life. Of course on September 14th and 19th, the Grand Mufti of Pakistan, Taqi ‘Usmani, the head of the premier Deoband school the *Dar al-‘Ulum* in Korangi, issued a counter-fatwa, which clarifies the legality of Islamic TV and more importantly Islamic banking. It needs reminding here that a series of counter-fatwa’s that were offered against Maulana Hussain Ahmad Madani in the 1940’s, fatwa’s sanctioned by Maulana Ashraf ‘Ali Thanawi, preceded the violent split between India and Pakistan. What Agamben designates as biopolitical caesura, the law of people formation, the ceaseless separation of *bios* and *zoē*, seems busy at work yet again.

As the various Taliban offshoots and groups have gradually divided and turned their guns on each other, Baudrillard’s statement, “terrorism would rise against Islam”⁶⁶⁴ once again takes on the tone of an ominous prophecy. The Deoband has from its inception never formed a political unified entity, and since the 80’s has split into numerous factions as we pointed out in an earlier chapter. However a split of this magnitude among senior clerics rather than militant offshoots is unprecedented, and today as we speak, senior figures of the Deoband like Maulana Fazlur Rahman (JUI-F) and Rafi ‘Usmani, face the potential wrath if not bullet of the very Taliban movement that they assiduously supported throughout the 90’s and early years of 2000.

The Teli-ban, the ban on representation as such, and the banking ban, a ban on the engine driving the political economy of globalization, suggest then a discursive legal compliment to the now pervasive threat of physical violence posed by the Taliban. That is to say that the fatwa is no longer targeting the individual body and its conduct directly, but that of the body politic. The transition from tactics to strategy is as Foucault describes

⁶⁶⁴ Baudrillard, *The Spirit of Terrorism*, p. 12.

in ‘Docile Bodies’ a key moment in the transition towards biopolitical strategies of power: ‘relations of power, they are played; it is these games of power (*jeux de pouvoir*) that one must study in terms of tactics and strategy’.⁶⁶⁵ While the chapter on docile bodies is concerned with elaborating the tactics of disciplinary power and its abilities to arrange, control, and dispose of the life of the individual body, in *Society Must Be Defended* and *The History of Sexuality* Foucault shifts focus from the relations between power and the individual to those of power and the population; from “tactics” to “strategy” thus represents a shift in the scale and object target; body to *bios*. It may be worth re-reading his most oft quoted and famous passage from the *Will to Knowledge*.⁶⁶⁶

In light of this transition from tactics to strategy, it may be argued that the traditional 18th and 19th century disciplinary domain of the *fatwa*, its principal target, was the natural body. The Deoband’s ‘ulama power was perhaps itself constituted through techniques of discipline deriving from the changing forms of law, warfare and the spatial regulation of the private domain under colonialism. There is then a certain discontinuity in the scope and target of the fatwa which exemplifies the overall biopoliticization of Islamic practice and discourse that I am seeking to highlight. The Teli-ban fatwa seeks to create a counter space of sovereign power targeting the pious ummah (not just *kufaar*), and hence this non-state juridical fatwa undermines the intimacy of official state sovereignty (premised on respect for Islam) and law. It thereby creates a space for the exercise of a counter-decision, and in this way the sovereignty of its own law. It is a form of potential law-positing, or mythic, violence. The irregular and unpredictable

⁶⁶⁵ Foucault in Michel Foucault, *Power*, ed. Paul Rabinow, trans. et al. Robert Hurley, vol. Vol. III, Essential Works of Foucault, 1954-1984 (New York: The New Press, 2000).

⁶⁶⁶ Foucault, *The History of Sexuality: An Introduction*, p 136. Quoted in this dissertation on p. 94.

mechanisms of its potential enforcement bring ‘ulama sovereignty and violence into the field of play. The aim of this fatwa is thus not *primarily* tactical (anatomy-political) but strategic (biopolitical). It is no longer focused on the relation between the individual soul and his salvation that is the concern of the fatwa but rather the soul of the population. Its ambition is not local, but global, as the media ban most directly challenges all forms of the endless proliferation of self-styled Islamic authority.⁶⁶⁷ The Teli-fatwa here does not target the individual Muslim body nor does it seek to shape its conduct (its comportment, style of dress, diet, ablution, prayer, fasting etc.) but targets society understood as a mass, a Muslim population. It is a strategic move in a larger ensemble of power maneuvers. As Foucault highlights in *Discipline and Punish*, disciplinary power is aimed at individual bodies, employing surveillance, normalizing techniques and a “panoptic” grid of institutions, whereas biopolitical power has as its target a ‘species body’, it suffuses the general processes of life and death for a whole population.

Unlike the older forms of sovereign and disciplinary power which police and govern the life of individual subjects, biopolitics, is a new configuration of power, one which supersedes individual life and death and transforms itself into a depersonalized, almost bureaucratic matter concerning the security and well being of the population. It is not personal, just business. The tone of the Teli-fatwa is similarly dry, business like, matter of fact, not to be taken personally; it simply proclaims the law of operations for the ummah at large. It is an exercise of ‘ulama juris-diction that is no longer confined by coloniality (colonial sovereignty) to the sphere of the private. In this way the fatwa can be read as a perverse response to the surreptitious war cry of secularity itself. Foucault’s

⁶⁶⁷ The Baraelivis, Mawdudi’s, Hamza Yusuf, Nyaz Naiks, and Amr Khalids of the world, who increasingly deploy media technologies to counteract the traditional site and genealogy of ‘ulama authority.

insight that “the role of political power is perpetually to use a sort of silent war to reinscribe ... relationship of force, and to reinscribe it in institutions, economic inequalities, language, and even the bodies of individuals”⁶⁶⁸ can thus be seen to hold true of fundamentalists and secularists alike.

The disciplinary tactical aspect of the fatwa has by no means disappeared, it is simply subsumed and or complimented within a more biopolitical modality. In this way the historical transition of the shari‘a from enjoining to enforcement, from *fana* to fanaticism, is perhaps a marker of Islam’s irretrievable crossing into a modern biopolitical threshold. This fatwa is an exemplary instance of this crossing. We may thus paraphrase a section of Foucault’s 1978 article on governmentality as follows:⁶⁶⁹ Maybe what is really important for our modernity – our present — is not so much the drive towards an Islamic state as such, but rather the governmentalization (biopoliticization) of Islam. Given that the king’s head has not yet been removed, given that the juridico-sovereign model of power persists, the emphasis and fear of those forms of political Islam that target the state has occluded our understanding of a vaster more subtle mechanism of power operating immanently within the domain of the ummah more broadly. “Accordingly we need to see things not in terms of the replacement of a society of sovereignty by a disciplinary society and the subsequent replacement of disciplinary society by a society of government; in reality one has a triangle sovereignty-discipline-

⁶⁶⁸ Foucault, *Society Must Be Defended*, p. 16.

⁶⁶⁹ Originally: “Maybe what is really important for our modernity – our present – is not so much the *étatisation* of society, as the ‘governmentalization’ of the state.” (*Governmentality* in Gordon, Burchell, and Miller, eds., *The Foucault Effect: Studies in Governmentality*).

government, which has as its primary target the population and as its essential mechanism the apparatus of security.”⁶⁷⁰

The important task then is to configure the ways in which the ‘ulama combines these power towards tactical/strategic, and sovereign ends. What we have here then is a specifically *Deo*⁶⁷¹-monic (daemonic) combination of sovereignty, discipline and biopolitics. The fatwa is strategic-biopolitical in that it proffers specific counter-techniques of social management (i.e. banking, media) aimed at both prevailing state (Pakistani) and global (U.S.) power and other local forms of entrenched ‘ulama authority. There is no concession to an ummah here, only a battle cry — the logic of sovereign biopolitical jihad.

A parallel Foucaultian concern, one which leads us to the question of *homo sacer* and bare life, must also be addressed: “How can one both make a biopower function and exercise the rights of war, the rights of murder and the function of death, without becoming racist?”⁶⁷² Like their ‘secular’ neoconservative counterparts in the War of Terror, the death dealing that unfolds in the process of enforcing sovereign will (whenever such juridico-military mechanisms of violence are in place), is prevented from being regarded as either an arbitrary or malicious exercise of power, or as racist, because it is enacted as the defense of a ‘way of life’ under threat. In the case of the fatwa, the implicit directive is clear; the violation of the ban on banks, and the ban on media, is a violation of shari‘a and thus in the language of Taliban justice, this simply means that an

⁶⁷⁰ Contrary to many teleological interpretations of the way in which power is said to ‘evolve’ rather than mutate, Foucault made clear in his Governmentality essay that sovereign power was not simply ‘replaced’ by disciplinary power, nor that disciplinary power was in turn replaced by governmentality. ‘In reality’, he argues, ‘one has a triangle, sovereignty-discipline-government.’

⁶⁷¹ *Deo*: Djinn, or Genie (possibly related also to *Devi*)

⁶⁷² Foucault, *Society Must Be Defended*, p. 263.

unrepentant violator of the ban has become *murtid*, apostate, and hence can be killed without being sacrificed. The fatwa, as an instance of the technology of ‘ulama sovereignty, thus opens up a space for the production of an exclusive inclusion of the *murtid* as *homo sacer* (the ban of the Taliban): “The sovereign sphere is the sphere in which it is permitted to kill without committing homicide and without celebrating a sacrifice, and sacred life—that is, life that may be killed but not sacrificed—is the life that has been captured in this sphere.”⁶⁷³ In a parallel way, the War on Terror creates another sovereign sphere, a Taliban space (whether in Afghanistan or Waziristan) that can be bombed at will, because it harbors a form of life that is not worth living; a non-political alien form of human being (the abode of the transcendent evil of radical Islamism, the cancer of Islamic fundamentalism, the dangerous other). The Islamo-fascist and the *kafir* alike mirror the logic of sovereignty at play in these overlapping spaces of exception. The everyday Afghan Muslim then, perhaps even more so than the Jew under Nazism, living under regimes whose dominant political paradigm is the War on Terror, is doubly “the privileged negative referent of the new biopolitical sovereignty and is, as such, a flagrant case of a *homo sacer* in the sense of a life that may be killed but not sacrificed. His killing therefore constitutes ... neither capital punishment nor a sacrifice, but simply the actualization of a mere ‘capacity to be killed’ inherent in the condition”⁶⁷⁴ of the terrorist/jihadist/Muslim/apostate. As *Jewñ* (lice) the figure of abject Muslim life, the Taliban/*kafir*, is rendered as bare life. The framework in which the killing of the Taliban/*kafir*/apostate takes place is “neither religion nor law, but biopolitics.”⁶⁷⁵ In this

⁶⁷³ Agamben, *Homo Sacer: Sovereign Power and Bare Life*, p. 83.

⁶⁷⁴ Ibid., p. 114.

⁶⁷⁵ See section 6, “The Ban and the Wolf” in Agamben, *Homo Sacer*. He goes on to state “If today there is no longer anyone clear figure of the sacred man, it is perhaps because we are all virtually *hominess sacri*.”

way the execution of Daniel Pearl, “shock and awe,” and the torture of ‘terrorist/detainees’ at Abu Ghraib, would seem to be the handiwork of the same biopolitical-technological specter haunting our time.

Citizens of the Islamapolis

In a most general sense the term ‘ummah’ is of course as vacuous as the term ‘humanity’ or the ‘west’, and functions more like a political metanarrative or polemical quilting point. But it is important to keep in mind that the invocation of the idea of the ummah, is almost always a way to designate a mass, a population, and hence an object of knowledge regulation, and policing. In this sense ummah discourses are doubly biopolitical, in that they are not merely a feature of a range of Muslim political imaginaries, but rather constitute a modality that is useful to the logic of security that drives the proliferating indistinctions of the wars of/on terror. Transnational discourse on the ummah are perhaps, in this sense, more vital to the political economy of liberal regimes, whose pervasive logic of security and martial capacities for war thrive on the affective deployment of Islam as a vital threat. The American project for the imposition of liberal peace across the “Muslim World” is defunct without expert discourses on (political/radical) Islam as the engine of a counter-modernity, a unified homogenous plot, whose profuse resentments threaten “Western civilization” and its “way of life”. The idea of a unified ummah is thus central to the metaphysics of both Islam hating (e.g. neoconservatives) and Islam loving (*jihadists*). In our rapidly globalizing era then, the third biopolitical triad between ‘Security’, and ‘Population’ is ‘Terror’ rather than ‘Territory’. The ummah, as *Islamapolis*, may then be seen as an extension of the carceral

polis, replete with an imaginary geopolitics, that seeks to exercise yet again the power of normalization (Islamization). What presides over these sovereign mechanisms “is not the unitary functioning of an apparatus or an institution, but the necessity of combat and the rules of strategy. ... In this central and centralized humanity [read ummah], the effect and instrument of complex power relations, bodies and forces subjected by multiple mechanisms of ‘incarceration’, objects for discourses that are in themselves elements for this strategy, we must hear the distant roar of battle.”⁶⁷⁶

For Foucault war was the central problem of modernity.⁶⁷⁷ Foucault’s idea of war can certainly be related to Schmidt’s friend/enemy distinction and agonistic theories of the political (*ala* Chantal Mouffe). Its more significant origins lie however in my opinion in Heidegger’s conception of *polemos*.⁶⁷⁸ As Julian Ried notes with regard to the emergence of the disciplines, “Foucault insisted that the tactical models of military organization were of utmost importance to understand how war invests the order of power.”⁶⁷⁹ In *Discipline and Punish* war and the military sciences, and not the prison, are designated as the originary impetus behind the disciplining of individual bodies and the eventual transitions to carceral societies. As he extended his analysis of power from disciplinary to biopolitical regimes and modern governmentality, the problematic of war and power only intensified. *The History of Sexuality* elaborates further on the

⁶⁷⁶ Foucault, *Discipline and Punish: The Birth of the Prison*, p. 308.

⁶⁷⁷ “What I would like to study would be the problem of war and the institution of war in what one could call the military dimension of [modern] society. ... How, when and why was it noticed or imagined that what is going on beneath and in power relations is a war? ... Until now, or for roughly the last five years, it has been disciplines; for the next five years, it will be war, struggle, the army.” (———, *Society Must Be Defended*). In parallel, our concern here is with War (War on Terror, jihad), Struggle (*jihad*, *ethos*), and the army (Pakistani Military).

⁶⁷⁸ *Auseinandersetzung*, meaning war, confrontation, *logos* or *Kampf*, struggle. In later Heidegger *polemos* emerges as an ontological concept that describes the chiasmic relationality of Being and Dasein, the crossing of the ontological difference.

⁶⁷⁹ Reid, *The Biopolitics of the War on Terror: Life Struggles, Liberal Modernity and the Defence of Logistical Societies*, p. 31.

fundamental imbrication of liberal regimes, predicated on the production of ‘peace’, with war and biopower. In conjunction with Agamben then we can say that under modernity the camp and the *polis* merge. The Taliban are in an essential way a merger — a daemonic combination to use Foucault’s terms — of the camp and the *polis*.

If the political space of Pakistan has indeed crossed the threshold of multifold indistinctions — between martial law and democracy, between *fact* and life, between law and violence, between Islam as peace and Islam as war — it would mean that a new set of vocabularies will need to be developed to discern the complex folds of this state of emergency, which on Heidegger’s reading is symptomatic of the ‘emergency of being’. It is my contention then that Pakistan’s fate, and by extension that of the Deoband, cannot be understood or *interrupted* unless we take into account the *topos* of the metacolonial space which envelops its onto-historical destiny. The predominant shade of this matrix in Pakistan is military-colonial; a space where politics, in Foucault’s famous reversal of Carl von Clausewitz, is always war by other means.

The martial undercurrent of biopower, and in particular its thanatopolitical tendencies, have thus continued to suffuse all aspects of social relations including revolutionary anarchic and ‘constituting’ discourses. Doubtless Foucault would have approved of Benjamin’s take on the Klee painting “Angelus Novus”. The ruse of power, its ‘race war’ discourses, hidden and disguised as historico-political counter discourses, is perhaps most effectively alive in the thought and practice of resistance. Even his own genealogy comes under the scrutiny of the underlying *polemos* dynamic of life. Perhaps this is why Foucault remained weary of attaching himself within the intellectual tide of post-modernity and perhaps why he may have remained suspicious even of postcolonial

critique written partially under his name. Imperium is not therefore a devious errancy of an originally pacific project of modernity but rather its necessary correlate. If Empire and liberty — *Pax Americana* — as we now know so well, are two sides of the same coin, cannot the same be said of any instantiation of *Pax Islamica*?

Power of Death

Under the colonial regime the domain of juridico-Islamic power was confined to the sphere of the domestic. Additionally because of the decapitation of formal Muslim political sovereignty, the entire zone of remaining autonomous and legal power that was open to Muslims was redirected towards the zone of the private and the domestic. This is why in postcolonial India and Pakistan, matters pertaining to the reform of family law and the regulation of the female body, meet with stiff and violent resistance; as the Chicago trained scholar Fazlur Rahman was to quickly discover following his appointment by General Ayub to the Council of Islamic Ideology. Domesticity, which historically has been the space where patriarchal power was rarely trumped by the state,⁶⁸⁰ was thus the primary cite for the expression and exercise of ‘ulama power. The space of ‘ulama power thus underwent a mutation and indirect enlargement under the colonial apparatus. With the onset of independence political sovereignty would be transferred to the former subjects of colonial rule, but of course these subjects had already undergone profound transmutations under coloniality. Colonialism had indeed transformed political space and the very form of the subject who would inhabit it. If before the Lahore resolution the bulk of the ‘ulama opposed the idea of a separate

⁶⁸⁰ Ruby Lal, *Domesticity and Power in the Early Mughal World*, Cambridge Studies in Islamic Civilization (Cambridge University Press, 2005).

Muslim state, with the emergence of the name “Pakistan” the possibilities for ‘ulama power in an Islamic State began to garner a small but growing section of the ‘ulama who began flirting with the Muslim League.

The modern state has of course increasingly penetrated zones of the private while maintaining is formal regard for individual rights through the coup of the biopolitical subject. Traditional powers of the private subject, the male prerogative over his wife and children for instance, have also been increasingly usurped by the state, which alone takes charge of the rights of each individual in its flock. In his chapter “*Vitae Necisque Potestas*” — a chapter which provides historical depth to Foucault’s characterization of sovereign power as “the right to decide life and death” — Agamben shows how the expression “right over life and death” in the history of law first appears in the Roman formula *vitae necisque potestas*, “which designates not sovereign power but rather the unconditional authority (*potesta*) of the *pater* over his sons.” Agamben then links the appearance of *vita* (life) in Roman law with the collapse of the classical Greek distinction between both *zoē* and *bios*.

“*vita* is nothing but a corollary of *nex*, the power to kill ... Life thus originally appears in Roman law merely as the counterpart of a power threatening death. ... the *vitae necisque Potestas* attaches itself to every free male citizen from birth and thus seems to define the very model of political power in general. Not simple natural life, but life exposed to death (bare life or sacred life) is the originary political element.”⁶⁸¹

We can then apply this genealogy not only to the “father” of the nation, the Duce, but also to other expression of community leadership. Thus we can see this formulation of an absolute right to kill, in the modern Islamist understanding of the Caliph, an individual who holds both temporal and spiritual authority over the ummah. If in the

⁶⁸¹ Agamben, *Homo Sacer: Sovereign Power and Bare Life*.

broad strokes of Muslim history these powers were judiciously separated, today in the post Iran revolution world, they have become united. But this conduction was already presaged in the very idea of Pakistan. Thus in the configuration of modern sovereignty we must keep in mind the “genealogical myth of sovereign power” which has its source in the Roman imperium, which “is nothing but the father’s *vitae necisque potestas* extended to all citizens. *There is no clearer way to say that the first foundation of political life is a life that may be killed, which is politicized through its very capacity to be killed.*”⁶⁸²

If the battle within Pakistan is seen in terms of the metacolonial, as waged on the topological terrain of sovereignty, then the institution or individual who most effectively exercises the power of death, captures the space of sovereign power. Today it is this space over which the Army, America, and the Mullah alike, are in a bloody contest. These are not three distinct formations, as the long history of Pakistan demonstrates the filial relations between all three components. Their maximum alliance, of course occurred during the years following 1979. The intensity of politics today can be seen as the aftershocks of this destinal sovereign alignment.

If under the formal theories of modern sovereignty (Bodin, Hobbes, Schmidt) only the state has the monopoly on death, under biopower the affective power of sovereignty is redirected into the socius; the modern state tricks the individual into thinking that it, though the notion of *we the people*, is the true bearer of sovereignty, whereas in effect the actual power to kill is redirected towards the “executive” (the executors) or its titular head. However if the state redirects the affective component of its sovereign power through the general modality of biopower and the specific techniques of

⁶⁸² Ibid.

biopolitics, while maintaining control over the apparatus of death, today increasingly we see an indistinction in this liberal arrangement. Abu Ghraib could be seen as marking precisely an indistinction of this sort. If Lyndi England and her accomplices are being punished, it is not because of their acts of brutality and torture, but rather because of their assumption of the states power to humiliate and decide on life and death.

Ummi

By articulating the boundaries of Muslimness, both the modernists and the ‘ulama then are able to constitute, territorialize (and therefore terrorize) the ummah; Muslim *People* are produced through the deployments of specific biopolitical relationships and a distinctive logic of exclusion. The ‘ulama’s juridification of the shari‘a simply facilitates their role in the marking of social boundaries and limits (*haddud*), and the corresponding exercise of the exception through banning and exclusion. Let us recall then Agamben preliminary distinction between two forms of life: *zoē*, the simple fact of biological existence, and *bios*, a qualified form or way of life. A political ontology of the ummah (People), whether that of Iqbal or the ‘ulama, rooted in *tawhid*, produces the need for a single, qualified bios that is imposed as the essential definition of *zoē*, as *din* or way of life. In all Islamists then (Iqbal, Mawdudi, Thanawi, etc) there is a fundamental presupposition that the ummah (people) has a way of life, and furthermore, that this way of life, Islam, rests upon a positive, “natural” foundation. The imposition of Muslim unity (*bios*) which claims to derive its legitimacy as a representation of the natural (defined either biologically or culturally) Islamic way of life itself (*zoē*), leads however to violence

and caesura, simply because the very foundations of their way of life rest on a series of unexamined biopolitical foundations.

Muslim modernity then represents a certain crossing, a certain threshold by which time the capture of Islam in the apparatus of the shari‘a is complete. We may reverse this and talk of a capture of the shari‘a by a biopoliticized Islam. In either case, what we intend by this formulation is the almost complete withdrawal of any ontological possibilities of the tradition and their wholesale reformulation in terms of history, the political and in particular the becoming of nations (people, ummah). As the Ibn Arabi scholar Chodkiewicz notes, ummah is derived from *ummi*, which is usually translated as ‘illiterate’. “It appears a number of times in the Qur’an, in the singular, to refer to the Prophet himself (7:157-58) and, in the plural, to refer to the members of the community toward which it has been sent (62:2).” However *ummi* comes from the root ‘*mm*, from which the word *umm* (mother) is derived, “which leads the author of the *Lisan al-‘arab* to define *ummi* as “he who is as when his mother gave birth to him.”⁶⁸³ That is to say ummah and *ummi* originally refer to a state of innocence, or infancy. Agamben’s analysis of infancy (the relationship between language and experience) is highly suggestive here. Infancy refers to a new experience of the taking place of language “an *experimentum linguae*.”⁶⁸⁴ In-fancy does not simply refer to a stage of human development, but instead denotes “a mute experience of language” that precedes speech, and that is also

⁶⁸³ Michel Chodkiewicz, *An Ocean without Shore: Ibn ‘Arabi, the Book, and the Law* (Albany: State University of New York Press, 1993), p. 31.

⁶⁸⁴ Giorgio Agamben, *Infancy and History: The Destruction of Experience*, trans. Liz Heron, Radical Thinkers (London & New York: Verso, 1993), p. 6.

appropriated in speech. Infancy is the experience of language as communicability itself.⁶⁸⁵

In-fancy ... is not a simple given whose chronological site might be isolated, nor is it like an age or a psychosomatic state which a psychology or a palaeoanthropology could construct as a human fact independent of language.

If every thought can be classified according to the way in which it articulates the question of the limits of language, the concept of infancy is then an attempt to think through these limits in a direction *other than that of the vulgarly ineffable*. ... The concept of infancy ... is accessible only to a thought which has been purified, in the words of Benjamin writing to Buber, 'by eliminating the unsayable from language'. *The singularity which language must signify is not something ineffable* but something superlatively sayable: the *thing* of language.⁶⁸⁶

Today any possibilities for an understanding of the ummah in terms of infancy — this experience or experiment with language — is decisively broken with the advent of history and its biopolitical turn. Today language is a marker of subjectivity, the nation, and the ummah is government of the One.⁶⁸⁷ If unlike the Western tradition the resonance of the originary ummah were preserved in the myriad forms of antinomian Sufic practices, the *place* of Sufism today has itself been definitively displaced by the *Islamapolis*. Islam is now conceived of in terms of a 'secure' dwelling in the abode of ontic homelessness, the space of the *polis*. Political Islam is the desire for this political space, for the biopolitical security and securing of Muslim identity.

"Maybe", as Foucault writes, "the target nowadays is not to discover what we are but to refuse what we are. We have to imagine and to build up what we could be to get rid of this kind of political' double bind', which is the *simultaneous individualization and*

⁶⁸⁵ This insight paves a radically new way for understanding the significance of the Prophet being labeled 'ummi, which is usually understood as unlettered or illiterate.

⁶⁸⁶ Agamben, *Infancy and History: The Destruction of Experience*, p. 4.

⁶⁸⁷ Antonio Negri, *The Porcelain Workshop: For a New Grammar of Politics*, Foreign Agents (Semiotext(e), 2008).

totalization of modern power structures.” If the metacolonial signifies the ways in which life is increasingly colonized by operations and networks of biopolitical sovereignty, then Foucault’s admonition for movement in thinking apply equally well to “East and West”. Must we not therefore refuse the ummah, that is to say any idea of a collectivity based on identity, Muslim or otherwise. This refusal is not premised in favor of the valorization of something like secularity or West, but rather precisely because the ummah is itself merely a biopolitical variation of the same: the metaphysics of the West. To “save the ummah from itself”, will require therefore not more modernity, and certainly not more tradition, but the suspension of the global logics of biopolitical sovereignty, most paradigmatically assembled in the imperial will of the United States, and its arch inverted mimicry al-Qaeda. It is perhaps only in the space of relative equanimity that the task of thinking an originary solution to the question of life may unfold: “only if, in other words, there is thought—only then a form of life can become, in its own factness and thingness, form-of-life, in which it is never possible to isolate something like naked life.”⁶⁸⁸

So if religion, or more precisely fundamentalism, has come back to haunt the telos of the Enlightenment, it comes to us as no surprise that the ‘ulama would at some point reclaim their historically authoritative place in the formation of public Islamic discourses, and in the moral leadership of the community, a place that the secular Muslim League was threatening to supersede. Perhaps it was this old safe zone of domestic juridical space that attracted the ‘ulama of the Madani factions. But the key term here is “authoritative”. In light of the Deoband ‘ulama’s overall opposition to the project of Pakistan, the renegade Thanawi-’Usmani faction notwithstanding, the ‘ulama found

⁶⁸⁸ Agamben, “Form-of-Life”, in Negri, eds. *Radical Political Thought*.

themselves on the defensive in the new “Islamic” republic. By adroitly manipulating the otherwise tenuous link between Islam and territorial nationalism, and by showing how the survival of the former depended on the creation of the later, the Pakistan movement, which was ostensibly a movement for the protection of minority rights more akin to the Dalit movement,⁶⁸⁹ gave birth to itself from out of the womb of a split and dubious imaginary. Its correspondingly precarious existence owes in part to the casuistic conflation of Islam and Nationalism. The resultant ideology, the two nation theory, which in retrospect should be more aptly labeled the “X nation theory”⁶⁹⁰, became of course the cornerstone of the All India Muslim League (Pakistan movement), and ironically its post-partition undoing!

⁶⁸⁹ Naqvi, Nauman, “Pakistan, Islam, Bar-e-Sagheer ke Musalman awr Aqaliyat ka Sawal”, *Aaj*, Karachi, March, 2003.

⁶⁹⁰ In fact I would argue that the two nation theory is less theory and more hypothesis, and not a very good one at that!

Chapter VII

Conclusion: The Space of Thinking

Becoming Bio-Political: From *Fana* to Fanaticism and the Rise of the *Lashkar*

The closer we come to the danger, the more brightly do the ways into the saving power begin to shine and the more questioning we become. For questioning is the piety of thought. – Heidegger⁶⁹¹

The ‘political’ is the way in which history is accomplished. – Heidegger

As is well known, the driving *ethos* of the phenomenological and post-structuralist traditions was to counter the predominance of a series of Cartesian logics embedded within modern epistemology and social thought, particularly the liberal “Western” model of the sovereign autonomous subject. What the Cartesian representational traditions seemed to miss was an understanding, or *sense*, of the silent pre-given and taken-for-granted contextual backgrounds that shape the very conditions of possibility of knowledge and meaning. Like the phenomenologists more generally Foucault was also concerned with articulating this “background” of human understanding. Adopting the Heideggerian concept of *umwelt* (environment) Foucault reformulates it in terms of *milieu*, or the historical *a priori*. This *savoir* (knowledge), or

⁶⁹¹ Heidegger, *The Question Concerning Technology*.

space of power relationships, always already shows up as a particular “order of things”. Thus the imperative of political Islam, like its liberal and neoliberal counterparts, lies in its will-to-order. For the entire spectrum of players on the horizon of political Islam, Islam is said to offer a ‘code’, more than a ‘way’, of *placing* and ordering life and things. In the meantime the very ways in which life is now understood, the ways in which it has come to be placed at the center of politics, is a transformation that has gone unremarked by Islamist theorists. The significance of “life”, and hence the meaning of Islam as a way of life or *din*, has remained unthought, as if it were a transhistorical constant. This is why in this work I have been interested in articulating the *episteme* of political Islam. Through an archae-genealogy I hope to have shown the ways in which past and present imperial forms of knowledge (*savoir*) now constitute the “forms of subjectivity and worldliness”⁶⁹² of the Muslim *life world*. The project has been aimed at articulating this *savoir*. And yet because we stand within this *savoir* we can only hint at it.

I have suggested that the emergence of the Taliban phenomenon (the destinal mutation of the Deoband) — and by extension, much of the global radical jihadist movement — cannot be adequately understood through reference to Islamist ideology as such, but instead might be more usefully situated on a metacolonial horizon; a horizon which is itself a complex of intersecting spaces of power. Part of the labor of thinking that this work sought to undertake, was to explicate the metacolonial as a way of supplementing the predominantly representational and temporal modality of postcolonial critique, with a spatial and affective biopolitical analysis. In the *Islamapolis*, understood as a metacolonial space, there is an intensification of what Agamben calls the ‘politicization of life’: the growing inclusion of man’s natural life in the mechanisms and

⁶⁹² Wainwright, *Decolonizing Development: Colonial Power and the Maya*.

calculations of power. Contrary then to the Deoband and Taliban's own self-regard as agents for the enactment and *enforcement* of divine commandment (the juridification of the *shari'a*) and the left/liberal consensus of the Taliban as figures outside of time and reason — as strange reincarnations of medieval Islamic sentiment — the Taliban/Deoband should be seen as an exemplary site of modernity; exemplary not merely in the sense of the modern as the material and temporal conditions of its possibility, but in the sense of modernity's primary politico-theological characterization. In both Foucault and Agamben the threshold of the modern era occurs when politics turns into biopolitics; the point when natural life begins to be included in the mechanisms and calculations of power.⁶⁹³ For Agamben “the entry of *zoē* into the sphere of the *polis* – the politicization of bare life as such – constitutes the decisive event of modernity and signals a radical transformation of the political-philosophical categories of classical thought.” Deoband praxis is I have argued, completely biopolitical, and can be further characterized as driven by the will to sovereign power. And if it is indeed biopolitical, then it is already Western in the most essential of senses.

Hence another key strand of my argument has been to suggest that 'ulama practices should be understood in relationship to a history of power and the series of political technologies of the body through which they produce bare life. I have attempted to show how we can situate the 'ulama in relationship to the three broad forms of power which are exercised spatially; sovereignty, discipline and biopolitics — “sovereignty is exercised within the borders of a territory, discipline is exercised on the bodies of the individual, and security [biopolitics] is exercised over a whole population.”⁶⁹⁴ The

⁶⁹³ Agamben, *Homo Sacer: Sovereign Power and Bare Life*, p. 3.

⁶⁹⁴ Foucault, *Security, Territory, Population*, p. 11.

territorial practices of the ‘ulama, as we have seen with reference to the technology of blasphemy, are exercised in the production of the boundaries of ummah inclusion/exclusion (the *ummagination*); discipline is exercised in the space of the madrasa, in the regulations, dressage and habit formations of the individual body; and the security practices of the Deoband/Army/*Lashkar*/Taliban are exercised through jihad, which is in part concerned with the security and defense of the ummah at large. Together a combination and mixing of these powers produces a daemonic apparatus. Together they constitute the statification and biopoliticization of the ‘ulama.

According to Schmitt politics is, by definition concerned with the “state.” However as Agamben reminds us Schmitt’s political was also a political theology, and hence the state is not confined to the *polis*; it also designated status, space and rank within the socius (*bios*). Nor did Schmitt confine “state” politics to the acts of a sovereign head of state, dictator or government institution. Rather Schmitt’s point is less about state sovereignty and more about understanding how that which is sovereign is “state-like”. The parallel here is with Foucault’s notion of governmentality and statification. When governmentality, rather than a reified hypostatized state, becomes our grid of intelligibility, then the horizons/spaces of the political enlarge without implying the disappearance of the State. Rather the State is now reconfigured as a multiplicity (an assemblage), as the shifting node of a series of complex filiations of power. In *The Birth of Biopolitics* Foucault emphatically claims that “the state does not have an essence,” that it is not “an autonomous source of power.”⁶⁹⁵ Once we no longer confine our understanding of the state to the traditional sovereign or political domain, when we

⁶⁹⁵ The state is only an “effect, the profile, the mobile shape of a perpetual statification [*étatisation*] ... in the sense of incessant transactions which modify, or move, or drastically change, or insidiously shift.” —, *The Birth of Biopolitics*, p. 77.

situate the state within a broader network of power, when we have “cut of the Kings head” so to speak, we can see how ‘ulama sovereign practices enable them to take on the mythic and magical powers of the state.

Here again we may be tempted to read the transition of the ‘ulama in Benjaminian terms; from the uncertainties of *divine violence* to the certainties of *mythic violence*. Thus the ‘ulama behave like a “state” precisely when they engage in sovereign practices.

Sovereignty in turn, is rendered through the right to *declare* the enemy and to subsequently command power over the body of the enemy to the point of death.

Spectacular displays of violence against the body of the condemned, as Foucault reminds us in *Discipline and Punish*, are the classical hallmarks of sovereign political power, which the Taliban and the ‘ulama in Pakistan have amply demonstrated. Jihad therefore should be seen as a technology of war, a technology of war which encompasses an economy of violence and power in much the same way as liberal geopolitics does⁶⁹⁶.

Appeals to the supernatural (providence, Allah), the ritualized performances of power (*Allah-ho-Akbar* and off with his head) and the glorified media representations of violence, are all key aspects of the jihadist/liberal logic which binds together the body, power and violence. Jihad is thus the cipher for the appropriation of the “magical technologies of war.”⁶⁹⁷ Therefore the right to declare jihad, and the right to declare the heretic/apostate/enemy, are together biopolitical technologies: “It can even be said that the production of a biopolitical body is the original activity of sovereign power.”⁶⁹⁸ The ‘ulama’s love for and valorization of jihad, so amply demonstrated in Rafi ‘Usmani’s

⁶⁹⁶ For an excellent account of how geopolitics is now also biopolitics see {{Vaughan-Williams, 2009 #12826}} For the now classic Foucaultian reading of geopolitics see {{Tuathail, 1996 #7577}}

⁶⁹⁷ Taussig, *The Magic of the State*. This phrase is taken from Zainab Bahrani, *Rituals of War: The Body and Violence in Mesopotamia* (Zone Books, 2008).

⁶⁹⁸ Agamben, *Homo Sacer: Sovereign Power and Bare Life*.

memoirs,⁶⁹⁹ and the broad vitalist allure of jihadist masculinity and heroism (the culture of *shahadat* for the party or the state), is ultimately drawn, like the sexiness of the military uniform, from the reservoir of this capacity for sovereign mythical violence: “sovereign violence is in truth founded not on a pact but on the exclusive inclusion of bare life.”⁷⁰⁰ It is this capacity for ultra violence over bare life that marks sovereign power. Additionally the ability to control the mechanisms of violence over bare life outside of the formal juridical boundaries of the state, is precisely that which renders ‘ulama power as a species of the exception.

As I have shown in the preceding chapters, practices of exclusion and violence against the excluded seem to be the hallmark of the Deoband in Pakistan today. The right to define and kill the enemy establishes the sovereign, and is according to Agamben, the essential right of modern politics. Agamben claims that it is this relationship of exception which undergirds the structure of the modern juridical relation — the relation of the sovereign structure of law to its subjects: “In this sense, the sovereign decision on the exception is the originary juridico-political structure on the basis of which what is included in the juridical order and what is excluded from it acquire their meaning.” This *unlocalizable* topology of the exception is vital in understanding the transformation of the ‘ulama, who must first enter into a relationship (or produce) a state of exception in order to open up a space in which the determination of a certain *Islami-nizam* becomes possible. In this way the sovereign exception can be seen as vital to the often violent ‘ulama technologies of rule, for whom “the sovereign exception is not so much the control or neutralization of an excess as the creation and definition of the very space in

⁶⁹⁹ Rafi Usmani, *Yeh Tere Purasrar Bunday* (1995)

⁷⁰⁰ Ibid.

which the juridico-political order can have validity.”⁷⁰¹ The topology of exception is itself a void, an empty space that is nonetheless constitutive of the modern legal system. The consequence of the biopoliticization of Islam is a simultaneous juridification of shari‘a, whose hidden but fundamental relationship between law and lawlessness, is yet another regional manifestation of the state of exception.

The task of this genealogy has been to expose this structure of the ban which constitutes this link between bare life and politics, “a link that secretly governs the modern ideologies seemingly most distant from one another”; namely Islamism and liberalism. This is how I understand Agamben’s exhortation “to bring the political out of its concealment.”⁷⁰² In Agamben’s formulation the “entry of *zoē* into the sphere of the *polis* – the politicization of bare life as such – constitutes the decisive event of modernity.”⁷⁰³ Contrary then to the way in which Islamic rage and violence is often depicted as a ‘reaction’ to modernization, to rationalization, or even to colonization, I have argued that the specific violences of the Taliban and the Deoband are manifestations of the modern itself, and not the outcome of a struggle between tradition and modernity. This is precisely what the (late) birth pangs of modernity look like, a future-present which can be glimpsed in Europe’s paroxysmal decent into violence a mere few decades ago, and what America continues to witness in its Imperial ventures from Vietnam to Iraq and Afghanistan today. There is little doubt then that we indeed live after the “failure of peoples”.⁷⁰⁴ The Deo’s, the djinns, genies and demons that haunt the political space of globalization today are of ancient provenance, and predate both capitalism and

⁷⁰¹ Ibid.

⁷⁰² Ibid.

⁷⁰³ Ibid., p. 5.

⁷⁰⁴ ———, *Means without End: Notes on Politics*.

colonialism and anything else we might be tempted to meaningfully designate as “the West.”⁷⁰⁵

In becoming historical and political, Islam today is in perhaps the final stages of a process of hollowing out. As Islam replaces Allah, Islam itself becomes *sacer* (sacred, hallowed) and the Muslim becomes *Musalmann* (*homo sacer*). Manifest most clearly in the passions of jihad, Islam has become primarily a biopolitical affect. The violence, fanaticism and terrorism that seem to be the hallmark of the more notorious forms of Islamic political expression (to be distinguished certainly from the mass of everyday “Muslim” politics) are not then signs of a revolt against modernity. It is merely modernity — the political — playing itself out and coming to presence in the constitution of Islam as a properly bio-political phenomenon. From this perspective then, it is not Islam as such but the (bio)political which is decisive. Part of the claim that has unfold here is that political Islam has crossed a threshold of biopolitical modernity; Islam is now fully incorporated in the space of the political. The violence of Islamic law, epitomized for instance by the destruction of the Buddha statues or the deployment of blasphemy as rational for murder, is the play of this space, the performance of its self-referential sovereign power. Given their intimate symbiosis with bare life, both these phenomenon exemplify the biopoliticization of Islam. In such spaces the violation and execution of shari‘a become indistinguishable. Under the Taliban, or at least wherever they hold sway, we see how a maximum of anomy and disorder can perfectly coexist with a maximum of legislation. Put in more succinct and provocative terms, today Islam is indistinct from the

⁷⁰⁵ For a radical Derridian re-evaluation of “Europe” see Gasché, *Europe, or the Infinite Task : A Study of a Philosophical Concept*..

West. In this sense I have aimed to disclose the Deoband/Taliban phenomenon as in fact a marker of the effective indistinction between Islam and the West rather than its antithesis.⁷⁰⁶

More specifically “Islam” and the “West” — their dominant discourses, practices and desires — now share, produce, mutually reinforce and co-inhabit the state of exception. Afghanistan is already the exemplary site of this production, and its anomie threatens to fully engulf both neighboring Pakistan (a process well underway if we take into account the war in the Waziristan region) and Iran. The tragedy of a relentless Imperial will is that it proliferates vacuous, ob-scene spaces, which in turn demand and require intervention; for the Imperial will also sees itself as an exemplary practitioner of order, it is an exemplary mentality of governance and sovereignty. The more it orders the greater the empty gap in which it must dwell, and so the global cycle of exception draws both parties within the ambit of its inescapable violence and non-sense. Even though political Islam, especially in its more intense variety, may appear as the shadowy obverse of imperial sovereignty,⁷⁰⁷ it is in fact its technological partner. Once the problem is viewed from across the *polemos* of critical ontology, the critical question is not the emergence of political Islam, or any other process of Islamization, but the emergence (and emergency) of the political.

In short then, today Islam and the West have entered a zone of indistinction. It has been the task of this work to problematize and articulate this zone of indistinction as a

⁷⁰⁶ To turn the neoconservative definition of itself against itself, political Islam — if not Islam in the totality of its current configuration — is an Islam that has been mugged by the (biopolitical) reality of modernity.

⁷⁰⁷ As the otherwise erudite post-911 intervention of Enseng Ho suggests. See his deservedly acclaimed article, *Empire Through Diasporic Eyes*, CSSH.

metacolonial horizon.⁷⁰⁸ My goal here was not to write a social history of the ‘ulama, but rather to write/think a genealogy of political Islam within which the Deoband narrative is embedded. To think then in the shadow of genealogy and the state of exception is to make manifest the increasing opacity of life under the shadow of power; the intensification of power over life, the intensification of biopolitics. The metacolonial ironically gives voice and visibility to this space. In showing how Pakistan is itself the voice of a biopolitical command, an exemplary metacolonial state, I am suggesting the fundamental homelessness of Muslim life today. This homelessness found its first major expression in the Pakistan movement, *Harkat-ul Pakistan*, the desire for a Muslim homeland, for Muslim territoriality. This desire paved the way for the domination of the *Lashkar-i Pakistan*, the Army (*lashkar*) of Pakistan. The *Lashkar-i Pakistan*, in turn gave birth to other *lashkars*, including the Taliban. Today, in the ungovernable will of the Taliban, is expressed the desire for a homeland for Islam itself. This ultimate biopolitical fantasy, represents the final threshold of the biopoliticization of Islam. It is perhaps not co-incidental that the word *Lashkar* — battalion, army or corps — also shares etymological roots with the word *Laash* which means dead-body or corpse. The Taliban are thus the pure expression of action, the *Lashkar-i Islam*. In this way it can be said the Pakistan is the graveyard of Islam. Sovereignty in Agamben, is also dead-body making in the name of life. Along the metacolonial horizon the *Lashkar-i Freedom* and the *Lashkar-i Islam*, can be seen to converge in a deathly embrace.

⁷⁰⁸ We may further and in a preliminary way characterize the metacolonial as itself a space that emerges in the wake of what Heidegger called the oblivion or emergency of being. Richard Polt, *The Emergency of Being: On Heidegger's Contributions to Philosophy* (Cornell University Press, 2006).

This genealogy has sought to trace and expose sovereign power which always appears in the form of a necessity or an absolute (as peace, as freedom, as *Islam*). The state of exception, “which is what the sovereign each and every time decides”, takes place precisely “when naked life—which normally appears rejoined to the multifarious forms of social life—is explicitly put into question and revoked as the ultimate foundation of political power.”⁷⁰⁹ In the metacolonial space of the *Islamapolis*⁷¹⁰ the ‘ulama seek to form an apparatus of power, a military space, in order to police bodies, constantly producing naked life in the guise of the heretic (*kafir*). In the Islamapolis, which is today an exemplary space of *shirk*, the sacralization of Muslim life and identity, a Muslim humanism if you will, has replaced that which is most essential, and assumes biopolitics as its primary task.⁷¹¹ This is why the celebrated political gesture of Islam today is jihad; action in the defense of Islam. That is to say Islam is in force—enforced—without Allah. This is a metacolonial rather than merely a postcolonial phenomenon, where colonialism’s original sin was simply to accelerate and intensify the birth to a hermaphroditic *bio-polis*. Colonialism is simply an apparatus of conduction. The power that political Islam seeks is therefore a biopolitical sovereign power (*potere*) which no longer has any form of legitimation other than emergency, and because of this, this

⁷⁰⁹ Agamben, *Means without End: Notes on Politics*.

⁷¹⁰ The meaning of the Islamapolis, as a space which is characterized by its lack of questioning and care for being, its erasure of being, should be more clear now. In the Islamapolis, which is today an exemplary space of *shirk*, the sacralization of Muslim life and identity, a Muslim humanism if you will, has replaced that which is most essential, and assumes biopolitics as its primary task. This is why the celebrated political gesture of Islam today is jihad, action in the defense of Islam. Islam is in force (enforced) without Allah.

⁷¹¹ The meaning of the Islamapolis, as a space which is characterized by its lack of questioning of and care for being, its erasure of being, should be more clear now.

sovereign power must everywhere and continuously refer and appeal to emergency “as well as labor secretly to produce it.”⁷¹²

With the emergence then of Pakistan, which is itself a species of a rights claim, and the deployment of shari‘a as a jurisprudential biopolitical technology, we have witnessed the acceleration, and spread, of the production of bare life as *homo sacer*. Today citizens in Afghanistan and the Frontier borders of Pakistan are all *homo sacer*. The Taliban phenomenon marks a new boundary of indistinction between *homo sacer* and sovereign; a beheading followed by a drone bombing. The tortured, torture. The new formulation of the Taliban’s power over life and death is reproduced through the circulation of new visual images of sovereignty. The execution or death video’s (beheadings, drone/suicide bombings, hangings), demonstrate the limits of control over the body of the ‘other’ and of life itself, and in this way “brings to light the secret tie uniting sovereign power and bare life.” This coupled with the constant anxiety of being the *homines sacri* for the other – the West or now even the Pakistani Army – demonstrate the reversibility and ultimate inseparability of these two characteristics. However it is not merely at these extremes that the stamp of biopolitics parades itself; it is in the very general rendering of Islam as ‘a way of life’, which marks, most ironically, the threshold of a subjection of a life (of potential) that is now constituted as Muslim life, as a fact.

The costs of misdiagnosing this violence-power are high. For jihadists power is located in the West; for Marxists in the means of production, for Liberals in the aberrant individual, and for most postcolonial theorists in the colonial effects playing out in the state apparatus and communal identity. If however our metacolonial thesis is correct,

⁷¹² Agamben, *Means without End: Notes on Politics*. (slight modification). The production of the heretic as *homo sacer*.

what cost has been paid for the misrecognition of biopowers hold over the South Asian socius, which all along saw its pyrrhic victory in the form of a nationalist displacement of a formal, ontic, colonial sovereign power. It is not merely the idea of the state that needs to be overcome, but the very idea of a people, for biopower is wholly immanent to the socius; it does not merely organizing it from above, or from some hidden central location behind everyday social structures.⁷¹³

If the “originary political element” is a “life exposed to death (bare life or sacred life) then “the originary juridico-political relation is the ban”, for it is in the threshold of the ban that bare life and sovereign power are held together. The ban is a force that “ties together the two poles of the sovereign exception: bare life and power, homo sacer and the sovereign”. The Taliban exemplify the ban in tying, crossing, the two poles, where one passes into the other. It is this relation of the ban that Agamben regards as the “essential structure of sovereign power from the beginning” and he charges our ethical sensibility to expose this form in the political structures and public spaces we currently inhabit.

The banishment of sacred life is the sovereign *nomos* that conditions every rule, the originary spatialization that governs and makes possible every localization and every territorialization. And if in modernity life is more and more clearly placed at the center of State politics (which now becomes, in Foucault’s terms, biopolitics), if in our age all citizens can be said, in a specific but extremely real sense, to appear virtually as *hominess sacri*, this is possible only because the relation of ban has constituted the essential structure of sovereign power from the beginning.⁷¹⁴

⁷¹³ See Nealon, *Foucault Beyond Foucault: Power and Its Intensifications since 1984*.

⁷¹⁴ Agamben, *Homo Sacer: Sovereign Power and Bare Life*.

The Homeland of the Metacolonial

The metacolonial, in its simplest formulation then, refers to the colonization of life by power.⁷¹⁵ It is a cartography of the shadows cast by power over life.⁷¹⁶ It is an exposure and critique of power as it plays out in what Foucault called, in opposition to demonstrative truth, the truth-event. Along this path, truth and untruth,⁷¹⁷ are not simply opposed but in a state of play, struggle and strife (*polis*), a state of fundamental imbrication. Foucault's history of the present can be seen as a history of this originary strife between truth and untruth as it plays out in history, where history is itself an echo of the struggle of truth and untruth, the originary *polemos* and event of being (*Ereignis*).⁷¹⁸ It is not therefore Europe or the West then that is technological, but history itself.⁷¹⁹ *Gestell* is an essentially an onto-historical, rather than western phenomenon. This point lies at the heart of the metacolonial's departure from the postcolonial. The metacolonial thus signifies the colonization of man, not by Europe, but by history itself. The history of Islam is today, like the history of the West, simply coincident with the structure of exception and the sovereign ban. This state of exception, now invests virtually all structures of power, and is thus the originary source of the imperial, metacolonial, condition. The topology of exception, and its technologization, is the presence that haunts

⁷¹⁵ A power which must be understood ontologically; as is itself a variant of ontotheology.

⁷¹⁶ According to Heidegger this shadow is paradoxically the destining of being itself.

⁷¹⁷ Much like the difference between being and beings.

⁷¹⁸ *Ereignis* is "the event of an erasure and a withdrawing, constitutive of presence and history as such, the unfolding of truth as that which turns away from presence within presence." Miguel de Beistegui, *The New Heidegger* (Continuum International Publishing Group, 2005).

⁷¹⁹ Importantly for Heidegger, as the German world for history, *Geschichte* suggest, history is essentially destiny. Destiny, not to be confused with fate, is for Heidegger a sending (*Schickung*) of being. It is therefore being and not man that has historical agency: "The history of man is played out in the manner and nature of his response to this exposure to the truth of being, which distinguishes him as human" (Ibid.) Hence the time of the event, *kairòs*, should be distinguished from the domain of ordinary history (chronology) which is the successive, demonstrative time of facts, for which Heidegger reserves the word *Historie*.

Islamic as much as Western modernity. Through the term metacolonial then, Islamic modernity is brought face to face with the ghosts of metaphysics haunting its technological, biopolitical present.⁷²⁰

The task of the metacolonial is thus to expose and fully understand, as preparatory to the development of ethical practices of resistance⁷²¹ (*askēsis*), the ways in which our lives are governed — managed, ordered and disposed— within the various disciplinary, normative, neoliberal and biopolitical regimes of power. The task of the metacolonial is to bring to light the onto-theological content that is implicit in the course of our everyday, global, political life. As an “effective”⁷²² history, or genealogy, the metacolonial is not interested in truth, but the politics of truth (powers of truth) and knowledge-power.

In his 1946 essay *Letter on Humanism*, Heidegger outlines a poetics of subjectivity, a language and way of thinking being that shelters the immense density of existence, its facticity, its singularity.⁷²³ Dedicated in part to overcoming the technological will to power of modern subjectivity—which Heidegger associated with the last great metaphysician of the West, Nietzsche—Heidegger turns towards *be-longing* through a reading of Hölderlin, “the poet who has leapt ahead of his time into the time of homecoming.”

⁷²⁰ In this way metaphysics is *not* simply what Derrida called a “white mythology.” Derrida: “Metaphysics – the white mythology which reassembles and reflects the culture of the West: the white man takes his own mythology, Indo-European mythology, his own logos, that is, the mythos of his idiom, for the universal form of that he must still wish to call Reason.” It is the abandonment of being that is the structural phenomenon and event which gives rise to the forgetfulness of being, an event which coincides with the history of our present and has its roots in the essence of truth itself.

⁷²¹ According to Negri’s thesis in the *Porcelain Workshop*, the ontological problem is rooted in the relation “between difference and creativity. ... resistance is what allows for the existence of a relation between both terms. But if difference and creativity are ontological, then resistance will be so as well.” Negri, *The Porcelain Workshop: For a New Grammar of Politics*.

⁷²² In this originally Nietzschean term, we should hear the overtones of “affective” also.

⁷²³ The *Letter* will undoubtedly form the *étude* for Agamben’s form-of-life.

The word ["homeland"] is thought here in an essential sense, not patriotically or nationalistically, but in terms of the history of being. The essence of the homeland, however, is also mentioned with the intention of thinking the homelessness of contemporary man from the essence of Being's history. ...⁷²⁴

Contrary to the many *volkish* readings of Heidegger's appropriation of Hölderlin, Heidegger's homeland was ontological and not merely national or territorial. "The homeland of this historical dwelling is nearness to being"⁷²⁵ Heidegger's later thought is incompatible with any form of national or biological (racial) egoism, as he consistently sought to expose the onto-theological ground within the concept of the political. Against the idea of a homeland situated in terms of birth (nativity), territoriality, external borders, natural landscape, place, soil, Heidegger sought to give voice to the concept of *Ereignis*, the place (*ethos*) of ethics, a spatial rather than political ontology, a site where man's essential *relation* to the truth (space) of being is at stake.

In this way it is important to contrast the poetic sensibility of Heidegger, with another Nietzsche inspired thinker, Muhammad Iqbal. Iqbal is widely acclaimed as the poet and *spiritus animus* behind the idea of a 'pure' (*pak*) Muslim homeland. In Iqbal however the Nietzschean will to power dominates in the struggle between *power* (Nietzsche) and *ethics* (Rumi). Relentlessly beholden to the power of the West, and roused to the poetic 'defense of Islam' against an objectifying Orientalist and colonial imaginary, Iqbal was ultimately the poet of abandonment, the poet of surrender to the will to power. As technology grips Islam, it results in alienation, and the anxiety of this alienation propels the Muslim community to find a place, a homeland, a place of safety.

⁷²⁴ Heidegger, *Letter on Humanism* in Heidegger, *Basic Writings: From Being and Time (1927) to the Task of Thinking (1964)*.

⁷²⁵ Heidegger, *Letter on Humanism*.

For the Pakistani Deoband this will to power is reflected in its utter and complete devotion to *jihad*, which is often elevated to an obligation greater than *salat*.⁷²⁶ Hence we may say that in gaining a homeland for Muslims, Islam has become truly homeless (*apolis*); in creating a state space for the sovereignty of God/Islam, a Muslim state, an *Islamapolis*, Pakistanis have truly become refugees, homeless. Today as we speak, as the Pakistan Army battles its prodigal sons in the once pristine Swat Valley, the number of actual IDP's in Pakistan has become one of the highest in the world. The possibilities of an originary dwelling as Muslim, now seem to be proleptically closed off. Yet in this closing also lies an opening. And so perhaps only in this sense (of proximity to the abyss) are Pakistani's the most fortunate of all peoples, in that through them both the tragedy and the utter fiction of *the people* is most clearly disclosed. By placing the narrative of Islamic sovereignty within this history of power, by gaping into the danger that it has become for itself and to itself, we may open the possibility of a form of thinking which orients itself to ethics (thinking-being) rather than enacting power.

The transition then, from classical sovereignty to modern democratic politics, from colonialism to the postcolonial, from minority status within a potentially united India to a separate Muslim majority state, is not so much the story of the liberation of former subjects but rather their more profound entrapment in the very biopolitical (colonial-national) structure they sought to escape. The *Islamapolis* signals this entrapment of its own citizen-bodies within the space of the modern political. In becoming national, and in desiring the State, Islamist politics whether of the liberal variety of the Muslim League or the literalist variety of the Taliban, articulate a path of liberation almost entirely oblivious to the nature of modern biopolitics whose effusive

⁷²⁶ Maulana Imran Ashraf 'Usmani, *Jihad ka Mutlab Qya*, (Dar-ul Ishaat, Urdu Bazar, Karachi, n.d.)

champions they have themselves become. In the metacolonial space of Pakistan, disciplinary, sovereign and biopolitical powers co-exists and intertwine. This is why for ‘ulama like Rafi and Imran ‘Usmani—the sons of the founder of the Karachi Dar ul-‘Ulum, Grand Mufti of Pakistan Muhammad Shafi—jihad is touted as an instrument of unity, even as jihadists are now knocking at their own gates. If the disciplinary element of ‘ulama power results in multiple separations (caesura), the call itself is issued in the name of the One and the unity and brotherhood of the *Ummah*. The men of Jihad, to rephrase Baudrillard, will wage jihad against the jihadists.⁷²⁷

Coda on Empire

The American Sovereign Exception and the “Enframing” of the Muslim Enemy

Mainstream public-political discourses increasingly tend to show up “Islam,” the constitutive other of the West, as the major obstacle/challenge to a final dénouement of a global and enlightened secular/neoliberal order. However with the casting of the locus of this “opposition” as emerging from within the ranks of radical and jihadist organizations, a simultaneous act of dual concealment and a form of “enframing” Islam occurs. What is concealed is the degree to which (arguably) mainstream forms of political Islam are variants of modern political ideologies that do not fundamentally challenge the key frameworks of contemporary political theory (popular sovereignty, the nation state form

⁷²⁷ In his notes on *Jihad*, Imran ‘Usmani, under the ominous sub-heading “Jihad will last till the End Times” cites a hadith from *Muslim*; “Sayyidna Jabir ibn Samurah (*razi ilah ‘ana*) reported that the Messenger of Allah said: This religion will never cease to exist. A party of the Muslims shall always fight [Jihad] for it till the Hour comes to pass”.

itself, capitalism, profit accumulation, the capacity for autonomous governance over bounded constituents, etc.). Secondly the deep historical entanglement of the United States in the forging, co-production and promoting of radical Islamist militancy (principally as a bulwark against socialism and independent third world nationalism) is also concealed. And finally, the locating of the apparent tensions between asymmetric powers (Western civilization/freedom vs. fundamentalist Islam/theocratic tyranny) as rooted within the ambit of the terrorist/the criminal/the insane, makes the emergence of any ethico-political alternative, one that may take its metaphysical grounds for the intelligibility of being as rooted within an alternative history (of Islam), all the more impossible to emerge.

The American exercise of power over life, its unfurling of a form of global sovereignty, is encapsulated not only by its ability to invade and interdict both individuals and entire governments at will, but also by the ability to name juridical categories (illegal enemy combatants, terrorists) that place “Muslims” individually and collectively outside the bounds of international law and hence at the arbitrary disposition of the American Executive. Recall Schmidt; the capacity to mark the exception confirms not only the rule, but also the Ruler. It is of course power, and the force of power alone, and not the force of communicative reason or justice, that enables America’s self-configuration as the exception to the new global order/rules it seeks to safeguard. The Muslim, who need not be given any theological definition and need only to confirm to the *fact* of his Muslimness, can thus be seen as standing in a relation of exception to the West, enhancing the logic and rationality of an Imperial American State, whose current interventions and extension of power are further buoyed by a special historical sense of

mission, a calling that has typically been subsumed under the term “Manifest Destiny”. As Agamben astutely notes: “What is at issue in the sovereign exception is not so much the control or neutralization of excess” —that is to say terror, radical Islam— “as the creation and definition of the very space in which the juridico-political order can have validity.” Does Radical Islam then, effectively act as a guarantee for the rationality and condition of possibility for the enhancement, both domestic and international, of the power of the American State (and other states to a lesser degree)? Ironically then, has not Islam, and the associated excess of terror that it produces by virtue of its own ‘essence,’ come to be even more critical for outlining and propelling a sense of American identity and mission in a post-colonial, post-cold war era?

Hence, we should also ask what work the “blasphemous subject”, the suicide bomber, the militant jihadist, the Ahmadi, in short what work such figures of the enemy as heretic, are doing on behalf of imperial discipline and pedagogy. Public discussions about politics and violence, wherever Muslim bodies are present, however, tend to be wrought under the unifying signs of militant jihadism, al-Qaeda, suicide bombers, resident evil, or as Bush recently called it, “Islamofascism”. By restaging at the level of state power the journalistic formulations⁷²⁸ of liberals like Christopher Hitchens and his neocon brethren (all of whom remain under the thrall of that Orientalist grand inquisitor, Bernard Lewis), forms of essentialist/racist discourses are elevated into official state-superpower concerns on national security; they become part of the discourse of war. The imperial and governmental utility of the construction of Islamofascism as a discursive

⁷²⁸ And we can think of numerous works to this effect from the everyday speeches of Bush and David Frum to Dick Cheney’s master work of demonology, *An End of Evil: How to Win the War on Terror*. Tony Blankley’s recent last gasp attempt to resuscitate the merits of a bin Laden inflected Huntingtonian sentiment *The West’s Last Chance: Will We Win the Clash of Civilizations?* is reminiscent of the Muslim League cry, ‘Islam in Danger’.

signifier of global evil, at once everywhere and yet nowhere specific, as a kind of totalizing power arrayed against civilization itself, allows for the mobilization of imperialisms impressive vast and expensive machinery. Such *con*-structions play on the slippage of signs overdetermined by sentiment, and only serve to mask the techniques of global governance and the materialized specificities of modern neoliberal rule, by claiming to speak for humanity itself.

The moment is sufficiently dire to note the ways in which the “Muslim” is now effectively positioned as a uniquely globalized subject, a subject of theoretical as well as political and military labor. This widespread trope of the Muslims as the quintessentially violent and troubled Other of modernity and civilization, as a spectral figure outside of time, opens her up to the specific modes of discursive and institutional subjection and correction. Whether as policed subject-citizens in western democracies or tortured bodies in Abu Ghraib, the Muslim is both the prime and primal cite for violent interventionist strategies and inquisitions, by *jihadists* and imperialists alike.

Thus while it is easy to vilify acts of ‘ulama *taqwa* politics, there is a certain recognition that the modern, and in particular the American liberal imagination must perform. This is the recognition of specter haunting the very conceptions of identity and sovereignty. The way in which the ‘ulama draw sharp borders between “true believers” and “heretics” as a prelude for legitimizing violence against their bodies, is simply a theologically inflected form of the secular biopolitical “US vs. Them” characterization which has routinely accompanied the history of American exceptionalism and violence against the other. By violently dominating the articulation of boundaries the ‘ulama lay claim to speak for Islam itself, thereby attempting to localize within their own

particularity, an element that is unlocalizable.⁷²⁹ By centering Islam within themselves, the ‘ulama disavow internal differences through the concretization of an external threat (to Islam/Pakistan). The neoliberal guardians of the West perform a similar function in their characterization of Muslims as in need of yet another civilizing mission. In the western imagination, does not Islam, as a heresy against Christianity in the first instance and as a heresy against time itself in the second, function in imperial discourses to similarly produce anomic zones and spaces of emergency? The attacks of 911 were mobilized in the US not in terms of a crime, but as an act of blasphemy against the body of a global sovereign. It was coded as the first broadside in a wider uprising of anti-modern barbarians. This direct attack against the global sovereign in turn unleashed its own vast cultural-military and disciplinary mechanisms; torture, “shock and awe”, vast piles of human collateral damage and other exemplary forms of punishment, paralleling the ways in which the sovereign of the *ancien régime* responded to crimes against its body.

⁷²⁹ “When our age tried to grant the unlocalizable a permanent and visible localization, the result was the concentration camp. ... the juridical constellation that guides the camp is ... martial law and the state of siege.” Agamben, *Homo Sacer: Sovereign Power and Bare Life*.

APPENDICES

Appendix A

Critical Ontology

For this project the metacolonial was originally thought in terms of critical ontology; as a cartography or *topology of being-power*. Inspired by the traces and paths already illuminated by three key thinkers whose works span the 20th century —Martin Heidegger (1889 –1976), Michel Foucault (1926 –1984), and Giorgio Agamben (b. 1942) — the metacolonial aims to gather these various onto-critical vectors under a single sign. Thus in its fullest sense the metacolonial should be regarded as an ontological concept. In its shortest formulation critical ontology can be understood as a question of the *relation* of being-power. Its critical axis relates to power, and its ontological axis to being — critical (power/knowledge), ontology (being). If Foucault stands to the left of this formulation and Heidegger to the right, then Agamben exemplifies the confrontation between the two. Critical ontology is thus a disclosure of the crossing/tension between being and power; the *polemos* of being and power. This relay of being-power is constitutive of human subjectivity in its historical and political unfolding. As a creature of critical ontology, the metacolonial aims to disclose the situation of ‘man’ (*Dasein*) in the wake of an understanding and operation of life that is colonized by metaphysics.

However beyond the preface and this appendix, the ontological elements of the project have been played down in favor of a more concerted engagement with power. However it should be clear that being and power are interrelated questions; hence Foucault’s later turn towards critical/historical ontology. It was in one of Foucault’s final

and widely read essay's devoted to Kant, "What is Enlightenment?"⁷³⁰—an essay in which he attempts to distance and distinguish the practice of critique from humanism—that we first hear the conjunction 'critical ontology' and 'historical ontology'. The six references to "ontology" in this essay can perhaps be read as a late terminological gesture offered in acknowledgement of the decisive influence that Heidegger had on his entire corpus: "For me Heidegger has always been the essential philosopher. [...] My entire philosophical development was determined by my reading of Heidegger."⁷³¹ If nothing else this phrase offers us a potentially invaluable bridge between the work of ontology and the work of political and cultural critique. However due to limitation of length, intelligibility, and the discursive requirements, of the discipline of history, I have marginalized the ontological ramifications of the metacolonial and its key paradigms: biopolitics, sovereignty and the state of exception.

Heidegger, Foucault and Agamben — the original critical figures that informed my development of a metacolonial reading of history — together constitute the axis of ontology. Their works converge across at least three thematics:

'technology/*Machenschaft*', 'biopolitical sovereignty', and 'the space of exception'.

Heidegger's critique of technology and his diagnosis of modernity as nihilism (*Gestell*), Foucault's genealogical grammars of power (biopolitics and governmentality/security) and Agamben's 'sovereignty' (the state/space of exception), all share a broad characteristic which can be subsumed under the general trajectory of 'power over the singularity of life.' In Foucault's work the ontological resonances of his grammars of

⁷³⁰ Michel Foucault, "What Is Enlightenment," in *The Essential Foucault: Selections from Essential Works of Foucault, 1954-1984*, ed. Paul Rabinow and Nikolas Rose (New York: The New Press, 2003), p. 43 - 63.

⁷³¹ Dreyfus, *Being-in-the-World: A Commentary on Heidegger's Being and Time, Div I*, p. 9. For a brilliant elucidation of this connection see Rayner, *Foucault's Heidegger: Philosophy and Transformative Experience*.

power (biopolitics, discipline, governmentality, security) are subdued. However Agamben radicalizes Foucault's conception of biopolitical sovereignty, by resituating the question of power within the history of being. The broader aim of a critical ontology is to disclose the linkage between biopolitical sovereignty and *Ge-stell* — Heidegger's short hand term for the essence of technology and technological enframing (*technē*). In its simplest formulation then, the metacolonial, as a phenomenon, refers to the colonization of life by metaphysics (ontotheology); the colonization of life by power.

If ontology is the future—as the inter-disciplinary wide turn towards post-foundationalism would seem to indicate⁷³²—then this work seeks to stand as a preliminary exploration and bridge towards this coming ethico-political topology.

⁷³² See for instance Marchart, *Post-Foundational Political Thought: Political Difference in Nancy, Lefort, Badiou and Laclau*, Carsten Strathausen, *A Leftist Ontology: Beyond Relativism and Identity Politics* (Univ Of Minnesota Press, 2009). See in particular the essay “Giorgio Agamben's Franciscan Ontology” by Lorenzo Chiesa in Lorenzo Chiesa and Alberto Toscano, eds., *The Italian Difference: Between Nihilism and Biopolitics* (Melbourne: Australia: re.press, 2009).

Appendix B

Foucault's Concept of Power

For Foucault, critique is not a matter of saying that things are not right as they are. It is not simply a matter of saying I am against this or that. Rather it is a matter of pointing out, of uncovering, the kinds of assumptions, the familiar unchallenged, unconsidered modes of thought, upon which the practices we accept, actually rest, including and above all scholarly practices. The task of genealogical thinking then is to understand the political rationalities (or reasons of power) that operate at any given place and time. Foucault's historical methodology thus aims to provide tools by which the governed can understand the rationality and structure of power that informs the way they are governed and thereby better resist more intolerable and unjust forms governance. In part this involves understanding the contradictions and effects of the systems of power we inhabit. At the base of his critique was a complex, evolving and nuanced understanding of power. Foucault can thus be seen as offering not only a novel way of thinking about power, but also as offering a critique of the understandings of power that have been foundational for much of the 'radical' and liberal tradition of protest against abusive state power and other forms of social control and injustice. Crucial aspects and implications of Foucault's thoughts on power/knowledge/subject can be characterized as follows:

1) It avoids thinking of power as a thing or substance which can be owned or possessed. Power is not a capacity (as in horsepower).

2) It understands power as relational and spatial.

3) Most critically power does not only reside at the level of the State and the apparatus of the state (police, government, etc). Both of his key terms for forms of modern power, 'bio-power' and governmentality, challenges the idea of the bordered state as the sole container of sovereign power and authority. Instead power is capillary like and flows through the social body.⁷³³

4) Power is never a stable, coherent and unitary entity, but rather a collection of "power relations" that imply complex historical conditions and multiple effects. Power is as always field of powers, an assemblage. Consequently, whenever Foucault speaks of power he is never describing a primary or fundamental principle, but rather a collection of correlations wherein practices, knowledge and institutions intersect.

5) Foucault avoids essentialist understandings of the subject. For Foucault the subject is not a pre-given, essential identity outside power, but rather an identity already complicit in power relationships. The 'soul' or 'self' is in part, an 'effect' of power. If the subject is always already fully implicated in power relations, the effects of power constitute the very core of its being. Thus we must look beyond the liberal humanist subject for a more effective critique of power and the political.

⁷³³ "Power circulates throughout the cells and the extremities of the social body; it is an aspect of every social practice, social relation, and social institution..... Truth isn't outside power... [or] the reward of free spirits.... Truth is a thing of this world: it is produced only by virtue of multiple forms of constraint. And it induces regular effects of power. Each society has its regime of truth, its general politics of truth." Foucault, *Power/Knowledge: Selected Interviews and Other Writings, 1972-77*, 131.

6) There is no place of truth beyond power to which criticism aspires. Power is itself about “placing.” Power puts things in order (ordering), it establishes rules of hierarchy and distribution. Power produces knowledge of one's place (knowing one's place in society). We may say that space is power, that power operates as a system of spatial arrangements (e.g. the panopticon)

7) Power is not a one-sided, monolithic and repressive force, but rather is a fluid and dynamic relationship; one that emerges from a multitude of points and is coextensive with the social body.

8) Since power is not a simple hierarchy of domination and subordination, since power flows from the bottom up and circulates within the social body, power cannot merely be totalized in a sovereign state. In this way Foucault shifts the attention of the critique of power away from an over emphasis on the State and the ‘ideological state apparatuses’ (police, courts, military, etc.) and redirects them to other spheres (e.g. towards global markets, private corporations, other civic, social and political institutions: church, school, prison, hospital, factory, film industry, psychiatric wards, etc.)

9) For Foucault, power no longer functions only to distort, conceal or repress truth, but also operates through ‘regimes of truth’ (knowledge experts). Power is not merely deductive (a power that takes) it is also productive. Power is not only prohibitive. Power does not only say No!

Foucault kept modifying or ‘redefining’ his account of power⁷³⁴. In one of his last interviews he distinguished three different levels in his analyses of power: relationships

⁷³⁴ For a comprehensive overview see Mark G. E. Kelly, *The Political Philosophy of Michel Foucault* (Routledge, 2008).

of power as strategic games between individuals; states of domination; and governmental technologies.

Appendix C

Blasphemy Laws

- 295-B Defiling, etc, of copy of Holy Qur'an. Whoever willfully defiles, damages or desecrates a copy of the Holy Qur'an or of an extract there from or uses it in any derogatory manner or for any unlawful purpose shall be punishable for imprisonment for life.
- 295-C Use of derogatory remarks, etc; in respect of the Holy Prophet. Whoever by words, either spoken or written or by visible representation, or by any imputation, innuendo, or insinuation, directly or indirectly, defiles the sacred name of the Holy Prophet Muhammad (PBUH) shall be punished with death, or imprisonment for life, and shall also be liable to fine.
- 298-A Use of derogatory remarks, etc..., in respect of holy personages. Whoever by words, either spoken or written, or by visible representation, or by any imputation, innuendo or insinuation, directly or indirectly defiles a sacred name of any wife (Ummul Momineen), or members of the family (Ahl-i-bait), of the Holy Prophet (PBUH), or any of the righteous caliphs (Khulafa-e-Rashideen) or companions (Sahaba) of the Holy Prophet description for a term which may extend to three years, or with fine, or with both.
- 298-B Misuse of epithet, descriptions and titles, etc. Reserved for certain holy personages or places.
- 1 Any person of the Qadiani group or the Lahori group (who call themselves Ahmadis or by any other name) who by words, either spoken or written or by visible representation:
- refers to or addresses, any person, other than a Caliph or companion of the Holy Prophet Muhammad (PBUH), as "Amir-ul Momineen", "Khilafat-ul Momineen", "Khilafat-ul Muslimin", "Sahaba" or "Razi Allah Anho";
- refers to or addresses, any person, other than a wife of the Holy Prophet Muhammad (PBUH), as Ummul-Momineen;

refers to, or addresses, any person, other than a member of the family (Ahl-i-Bait) of the Holy Prophet Muhammad (PBUH), as Ahl-i-Bait; or

refers to, or addresses, any person, other than a member of the family (Ahl-i-Bait) of the Holy Prophet Muhammad (PBUH), as Ahl-i-Bait; or

refers to, or names, or calls, his place of worship as Masjid; shall be punished with imprisonment or either description for a term which may extend to three years, and shall also be liable to fine.

- 2 Any person of the Qadiani group or Lahore group, (who call themselves Ahmadis or by any other names), who by words, either spoken or written, or by visible representations, refers to the mode or from of call to prayers followed by his faith as "Azan" or recites Azan as used by the Muslims, shall be punished with imprisonment or either description for a term which may extend to three years and shall also be liable to fine.

298-C Persons of Qadiani group, etc, calling himself a Muslim or preaching or propagating his faith. Any person of the Qadiani group or the Lahori group (who call themselves Ahmadis or any other name), who directly or indirectly, poses himself as a Muslim, or calls, or refers to, his faith as Islam, or preaches or propagates his faith, or invites others to accept his faith, by words, either spoken or written, or by visible representation or in any manner whatsoever outrages the religious feelings of Muslims, shall be punished with imprisonment or either description for a term which may extend to three years and shall also be liable to fine.

Appendix D

Objectives Resolution

The text of the “Objectives Resolution” as passed by the Constituent Assembly March 1949:

‘In the name of Allah, the Beneficent, the Merciful’

Whereas sovereignty over the entire universe belongs to God Almighty alone and the authority which He has delegated to the state of Pakistan through its people for being exercised within the limits prescribed by Him is a sacred trust;

This Constituent Assembly representing the people of Pakistan resolves to frame a constitution for the sovereign independent State of Pakistan;

Wherein the state shall exercise its powers and authority through the chosen representatives of the people;

Wherein the principles of democracy, freedom, equality, tolerance, and social justice as enunciated by Islam shall be fully observed;

Wherein the Muslims shall be enabled to order I their lives in the individual and collective sphere in accordance with the teachings and requirements of Islam as set out in the Holy Qur’an and the *Sunnah*;

Wherein adequate provision shall be made for the minorities freely to profess and practice their religions and develop their cultures;

Wherein the territories now included in or in accession with Pakistan and such other territories as may hereafter be included in or accede to Pakistan shall form a federation wherein the units will be autonomous with such boundaries and limitations on their powers and authority as may be prescribed;

Wherein shall be guaranteed fundamental rights including equality of status, of opportunity and before law, social, economic and political justice, and freedom of thought, expression, belief, faith, worship, and association, subject to law and public morality;

Wherein adequate provision shall be made to safeguard the legitimate interests of minorities and backward and depressed classes;

Wherein the independence of the Judiciary shall be fully secured;

Wherein the integrity of the territories of the federation, its independence and all its rights including its sovereign rights on land, sea, and air shall be safeguarded;

So that the people of Pakistan may prosper and attain their rightful and honored place amongst the nations of the world and make their full contribution towards international peace and progress and happiness of humanity.

Appendix E

Elections Results

Table 1: Results of National Assembly Elections of November 1988

	Punjab	Sind	Frontier	Baluchistan	Others	Total
PPP	52	31	7	1	1	92
IJI	44	-	8	2	-	54
MQM	-	13	-	-	-	14
Other Parties	5	-	7	6	8	18
Independent	12	2	3	2	8	26
Total Seats	113	46	25	11	9	204

Source: Dawn (November 16, 1988)

Table 2: Results of National Assembly Elections of October 1990

	Punjab	Sind	Frontier	Baluchistan	Others	Total
IJI	59	3	8	2	1	105
PDA	14	24	5	2	-	45
MQM	-	15	-	-	-	15
ANP	-	-	6	-	-	6
JUI (Fazlur)	-	-	4	2	-	6
Minor Parties	3	-	-	5	-	8
Independent	6	4	3	-	8	21
Total Seats	114	46	26	11	9	206

Source: Dawn (October 25, 1990)

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